



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

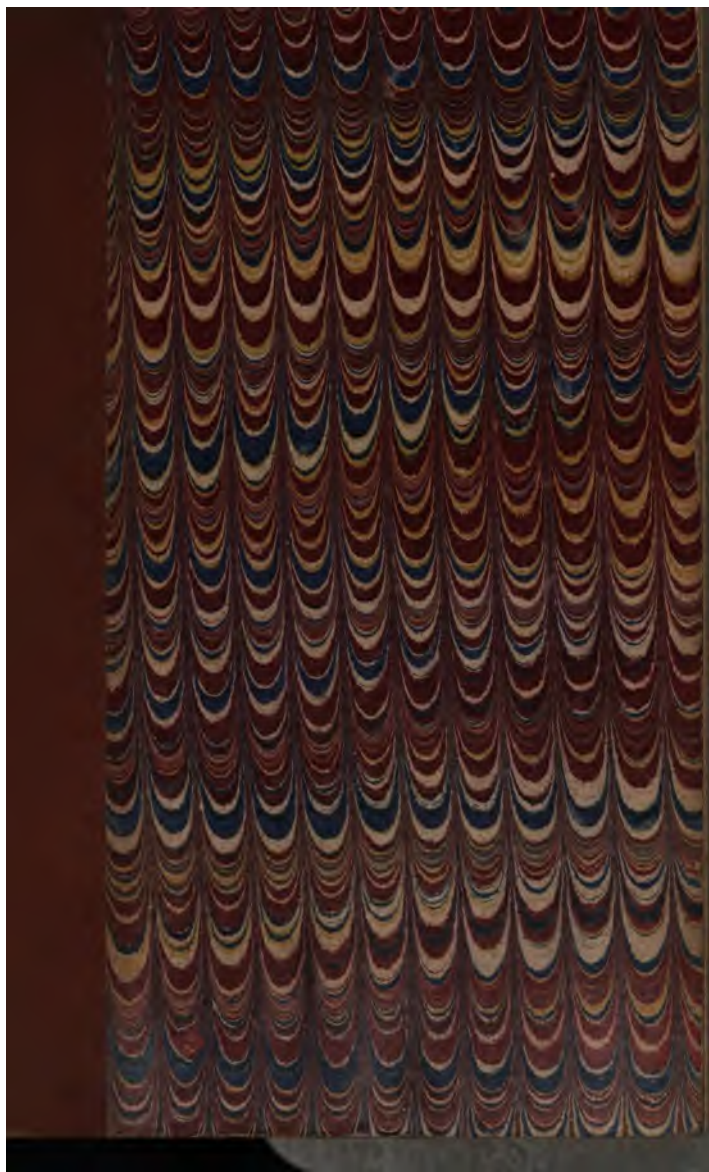
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

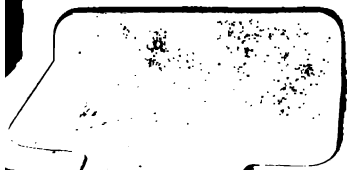
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



catalogued throughout

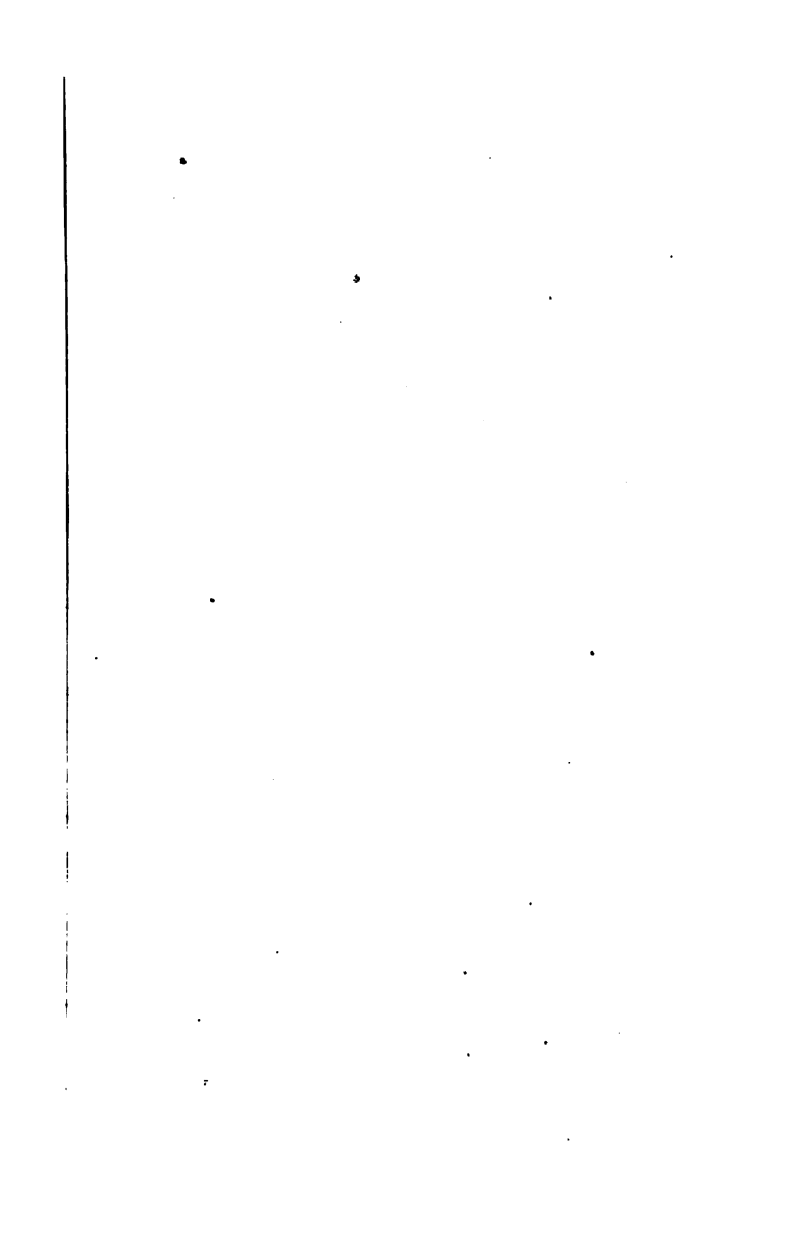


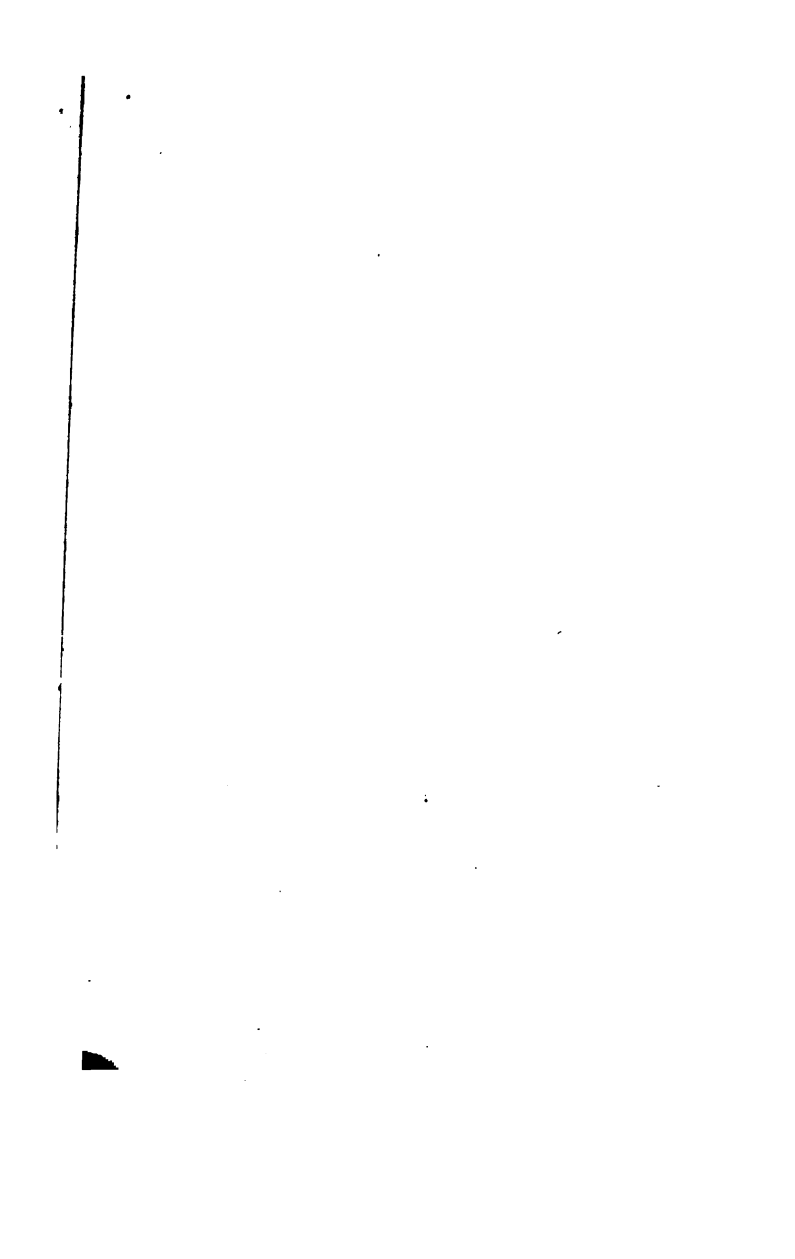


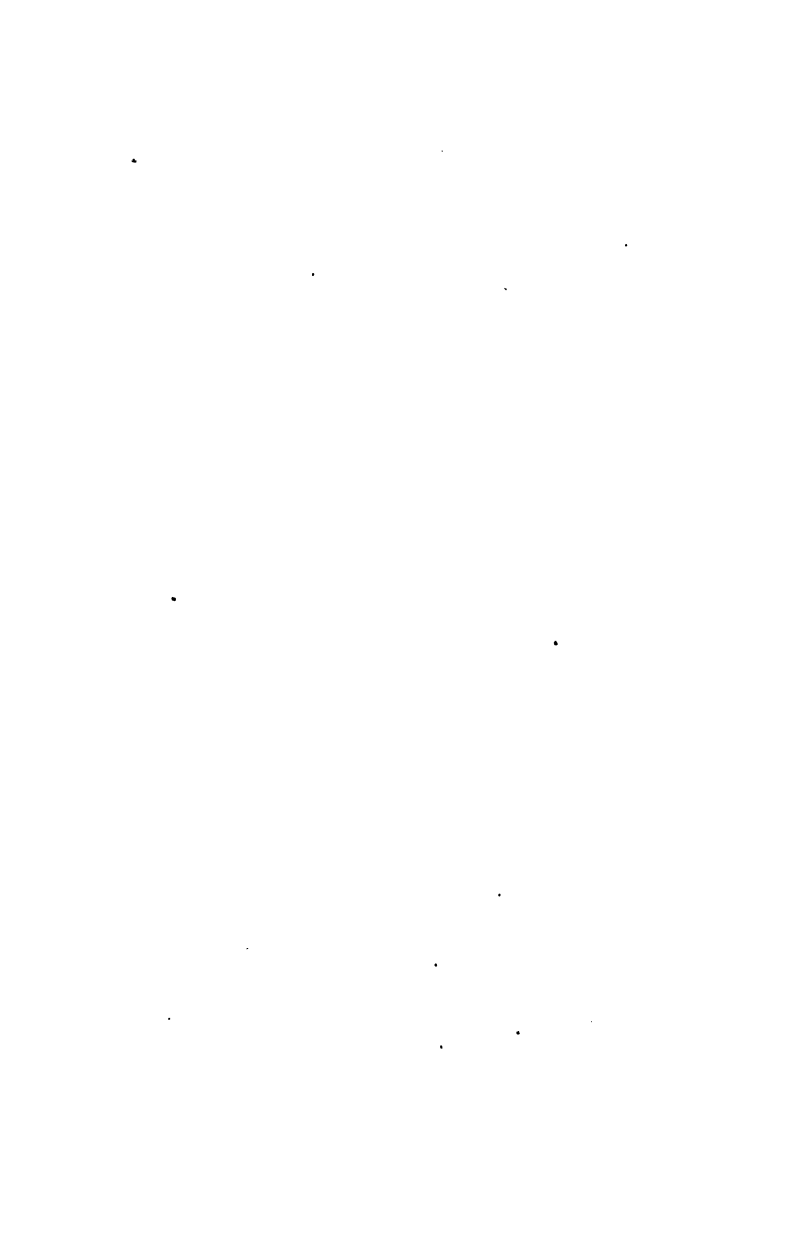
1

2

3









THE CLIFTON TRACTS;

PUBLISHED BY

THE BROTHERHOOD OF ST. VINCENT OF PAUL.

Cum permissu Superiorum.



“Can any thing of good come from Nazareth? Philip said to him:
COME AND SEE.—(John i. 46.)

LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET.
BEADER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

1853.

LONDON
PRINTED BY LEVEY, ROBSON, AND FRANKLIN,
Great New Street and Fetter Lane.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is with a certain feeling of satisfaction that the Editors have put into their binder's hands a third collection of the Tracts, which the support they have continued to receive has enabled them to issue since the publication of the preceding Volume. They take it as a sign that the Series has, in the estimation of the Catholic public, fulfilled, on the whole, the object for which it was undertaken by them. That they have accomplished all that may have been looked for from them, or which at starting they themselves intended or wished to do, they are very far from thinking. The most to which they would lay claim is, in some sort to have supplied an acknowledged want, and to have done a work most needful for the time.

Some, indeed, have complained that several of the Tracts were of too high an order, or of too theological a cast for general readers; in short, scarcely popular enough in manner or in matter for the class of persons whom it was intended to address. But to this the Editors would reply, that their object was to address *all* classes; to exclude absolutely none; to provide a series of publications, the style and language of which should be suited to the *intelligent* in every rank of life. Such an object may have been an impracticable one, or they may have underrated the difficulty of attaining it; but at any rate this was their object. They addressed themselves to those who, whether *educated* or *uneducated*, are capable of appreciating *facts* and following an argument—not to those whose *minds* have been so little exercised as to be incapable (in their

nion) of profiting much by any thing but direct oral instruction. Tried by this rule, they do not think that the result has been as unsuccessful as to some of their friendly critics it may have appeared. The several writers, as a little observation will shew, have been careful to avoid, or the Editors have been careful to exclude, every thing, whether in matter or in phraseology, which the learned reader alone would understand, or which, to be mastered, required that sort of intellectual effort which only education, as distinguished from ordinary capacity, disposes the mind to make.

With respect to the manner in which a subject has been treated, or even the selection of the subject itself, it should be recollected that neither has been altogether a matter of choice. Many subjects, from their very nature, necessitate a certain mode of treatment, and that perhaps not the most obvious one; and, again, a subject which looks simple enough to a superficial observer is found to involve the discussion of points which dilate under the hand, and entail a closer line of argument or more copious illustration than may seem at first sight to be required. To state a Catholic doctrine or principle is not sufficient; it must be so stated as to meet objections, preclude misapprehension, and refute error. To treat a deep and really difficult matter—the object, probably, of heretical attack—in a broad, popular way, without being shallow, weak, and even (apparently) dishonest, is not the easy task which some who have not made the experiment may imagine. To deal with it thoroughly or worthily, much thought, and painstaking thought too, is due on the part of the writer, and a corresponding amount of attention requisite on that of the reader; and it is a question whether any real good is effected, except where both these conditions are complied with.

However, in saying all this, the Editors have no disposition to deny that tracts of a more lively and striking character *would form a valuable addition to the series.* They would *simply wish it to be borne in mind that, as it was undertaken principally with a view of explaining Catholic doctrines and*

practices, removing difficulties, and answering objections, it was quite impossible that the majority of subjects could be treated with that animation and boldness of style which is more easily compatible with the position of an assailant. The object of the Tracts all along has been, not so much to attack and shew up Protestantism, as to win Protestants by a simple exhibition of Catholic truth, and a calm refutation and exposure of their errors; in other words, quietly to help on the work of the Church in this country amongst the vast masses of those who are held in a state of indifference or hostility to her claims by the combined forces of ignorance and prejudice.

It may have been observed that some of the subjects treated of in former Tracts have not been pursued in the present volume: the Editors, however, are not without hope that the writers may be able ultimately to continue and complete the sets to which they belong. The series on "The Church and the Bible" have, in accordance with their original design, been published in a separate part, with a preface to the whole; and the numbers which have appeared under the title of "Protestantism weighed in its own balance and found wanting," and which are now concluded, as well as those on the "Temporal Power of the Popes," may also be had in a similar form.

The Editors have much pleasure in announcing that they have commenced a series of popular "Tales and Narratives," which they hope will compensate for any deficiency that may perhaps reasonably have been felt to exist in the "Entertaining and Instructive Library." Like the Tracts, they will be published in connexion with the Brotherhood of St. Vincent of Paul, and are placed under his especial patronage. Each number will be written in a plain, easy style, and will embody some moral or religious lesson necessary for this time and country.

In the present volume has been included a short tract containing thirty-six plain reasons against the compulsory visitation of the Houses of Religious Women, which was published in the course of the last year.

No.

54. QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER PEOPLE. III. THE GOLDEN I
OF GOOD QUEEN BESS.

55. PREACHING THE GOSPEL DEFENSIBLE ONLY ON CATHOLIC PRI
PLES: A DIALOGUE HELD IN THE STREETS OF BRISTOL.

A FEW PLAIN REASONS FOR CONTINUING TO PROTECT RELIGIOUS WO
FROM OFFICIOUS AND IMPERTINENT INTRUSION ON THEIR DOME
PRIVACY. By an Englishman and a Catholic.

ERRATUM.

No. 45. p. 23, line 6, *for* compelled them by law *read* compelled tl
by penalties.

Historical Library.

POPISH PERSECUTION;

OR,

A SKETCH OF THE PENAL LAWS.

No. I.—HENRY VIII.—ELIZABETH.



By Permission.

LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

Popish Persecution.

POPISH PERSECUTION! what a strange set of thoughts do these words raise up in the hearts of our Protestant fellow-countrymen! The moment that they hear them, how do the minds of Englishmen go back to the thought of her whom they call "bloody Queen Mary," and to the days of the Inquisition! how do they recur to all the nursery-fables which they have been so early taught to believe concerning the bloodthirsty nature of Catholics and the Catholic Church! How little do they think that there is another and quite a different meaning which lies hidden in these words, when spoken by an English Catholic; that to him they may sometimes mean, not the persecution of Protestants by Catholics, but the persecution of Catholics by Protestants!

Many of my readers have doubtless been brought up to take for granted that the rack, the thumb-screw, and the gibbet, were instruments of torture employed solely, if not actually invented, by Queen Mary and other Catholics, for the purpose of persecuting their Protestant brethren; and that we are indebted to the "liberality of Protestantism" for that religious freedom which is the boast of the present age. I dare say many of you really believe that that degree of civil and religious liberty which you now enjoy is owing to the mildness and toleration of the Church of England by law established, which, knowing the weakness of human nature and its proneness to fall into error, will not allow any man to be persecuted for his opinions in matters of religion; and yet I am sure that some amongst you are shrewd, *thinking men, who would not willingly believe what is not true, or willingly allow yourselves to be taken in by misstatements.* I propose therefore in the following pages to tell you a few plain facts about the penal laws which have been

passed against Catholics during the last three centuries in this country; for it is a very important subject, about which you probably know little or nothing. You know indeed that all England was once Catholic, and that now (speaking generally) it is Protestant; but you have no clear idea of the means by which this result has been brought about. You have been told, perhaps, that all England was Catholic until God raised up certain good and holy men to reform the Church, and to preach those simple truths of the Gospel which had for ages been forgotten and lost; and that when once this pure light of the Gospel was set before them, men were so captivated by its beauty, that they gladly forsook the false and corrupt doctrines in which they had been brought up, and became Protestants, excepting only a few bigoted priests who wished still to keep the people in ignorance, but whose success was very limited by reason of the badness of their cause. Something of this kind is the popular idea, I think, of the religious history of this country since the Reformation, more especially in those parts of England where Catholics are but few and but little known. It is, however, so extremely false, that I am anxious to do my best to correct it; and for this purpose I wish to lay before you some plain matters of fact which nobody can deny, and from which you will soon learn that what really destroyed the Catholic religion in this country, as far as it ever *has* been destroyed,—that is, what caused it to be abandoned by so many at first, and what has prevented so many from embracing it ever since,—has been neither more nor less than mere persecution. Yes; strange as it may sound to you, if you now hear it for the first time, Protestantism became the established religion of this country, not because men were drawn towards it by the force of its own truth and beauty, and by the quiet workings of God's grace within their souls, but because men were driven into it through fear of the axe and the halter, the rack and the ripping-knife. This is the plain truth of the matter, as I hope presently to make clear to you by a short sketch of the principal laws *which concern this subject*; but as I wish to make this *sketch as short as I can*, I hope those of my readers who *have the opportunity* will not omit to search out the history of

fully for themselves; for I am persuaded that the more they do so, the more thoroughly they will recognise the truth and justice of what has now been said.

Now you know that from the time of the Apostles down to the reign of Henry VIII., who was the father of Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth,—that is, for full 1400 years,—there was in England but one Church and one religion, namely, the Catholic Faith. You know too that whatever were his talents and powers as a king, Henry was a very wicked man; and it is quite clear that it was not from the love of God or from zeal for His truth, but for the sake of gratifying his own evil lusts and passions, that Henry rent this kingdom from the See of Rome, to which it had for centuries owed allegiance in spiritual things, and made himself supreme head of the Church of England. By this act the king and his new-made “Church” became severed from the rest of the Christian world; and as the king had no spiritual power or authority from Christ or His Apostles, he was obliged to make up the want by cruel and bloodthirsty measures, such as would awe the whole kingdom into obedience, and secure the subjection of the clergy to his sway. Knowing, as he well did, that nothing in the Bible or in the history of the Church of God would bear him out in his sacrilegious claim of spiritual headship, he was forced, I say, to make up the defect by beginning a course of severest persecution against those who denied his supremacy in sacred things.

It was by no means all at once that the penal laws, of which I am going to speak, were enacted. It was only by a number of successive acts of tyranny that the royal supremacy in spiritual matters was fully established in this land and enforced on all our countrymen; and it was only by degrees that the penalties, inflicted by Protestant sovereigns on Catholics for refusing to bow down to this supremacy, reached their full and perfect growth. It was in the 26th year of Henry’s reign that the first actual step was made in the unhappy schism which our countrymen have been taught to revere as “the glorious” Reformation. In that year an act of parliament was passed, declaring that “the king shall be taken as the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England, and shall have annexed to

the imperial crown of this realm all honours, jurisdictions, privileges, authorities, immunities, and profits to the dignity of supreme head of the same Church belonging; and shall have power to visit, redress, reform, order, correct, restrain, and amend all such errors, *heresies*, abuses, offences, contempts, and enormities, which by any *spiritual* authority may lawfully be reformed or repressed; any usage, foreign laws, foreign authority, prescription, or any thing to the contrary notwithstanding." To increase the royal estate and maintain the new-made supremacy of the king, it was enacted that he should for ever have the first-fruits of all benefices and livings, and a tenth part of their annual income. The Bishops were forbidden to be presented to the Pope of Rome for his confirmation, as had hitherto been always done; and if they broke this law, they incurred a *præmunire*, that is, they forfeited their goods and chattels, and were imprisoned during the king's pleasure. And thus it was that Henry VIII. became in fact the Pope of England, neither more nor less; for from that time to this, the reigning sovereign has been "on earth supreme head" of the Church which was then set up, just as the Pope had been supreme head of the Church before; and whatever power the Pope formerly had over the whole Church of God, to administer discipline, to correct abuses, and to censure heresies, was given over and "for ever united to the imperial crown of this realm" by the laity in parliament and the clergy in convocation, in the 26th year of King Henry's reign.

Let us now see what means were used in order, not to check the growth of false doctrine and heresy, or to maintain the unity of faith, but simply and solely to guard and protect this royal supremacy. Cranmer was at this time Archbishop of Canterbury; and it was by his advice that it was made the same kind of capital offence to deny that the king was head of the Church, as to deny that he was head of the State. If any one denied it in words, he could be fined and imprisoned at the royal will; if he repeated his words, he came under a *præmunire*; and if he uttered them a third time, he suffered as a traitor at the hands of the executioner. If he went on to deny it in writing or by any open ac-

at once became guilty of high treason. It was also high treason to refuse to take the oath which abjured the Pope's supremacy. And these were the means by which freeborn Englishmen, who had been baptised and bred in the Catholic Faith, were forced to renounce the ruler to whom Christ Jesus had committed the charge of His flock, and to bow down before the image which man had set up in his place! These were the acts by which it was found necessary or convenient to fence in the new-made supremacy of the crown in spiritual matters; and thus it was that through the reign of Henry that supremacy was maintained against the will of by far the greater part of the laity and clergy, who, though most of them at least had betrayed the sacred trust committed to their charge in the most cowardly manner, yet afterwards longed to be re-united with the rest of Christendom.

But perhaps you may think that, after all, these were but laws and acts passed by the king with the intention of frightening the people into submission to his will, but that surely laws of such unheard-of severity were never actually enforced. Now I would beg you to listen, while I tell you of a few particular cases in which these cruel measures were brought into play; taking care to remember, as I have told you already, that their object was not to save the souls of Christians from doubting or denying an article of the Catholic Faith, but simply and solely to crush and destroy all those who believed that the king had no right or claim from God to set himself up as the supreme head of the Church. The truth is, that it was not Catholics alone, but Protestants also, who would not submit to the state supremacy, and who therefore suffered the penalty of their crime. Indeed, so far did Henry carry his lengths, that a learned foreigner—and a Reformer, too, into the bargain—was obliged to cry out, “Good God! what a land is this, where Catholics are hanged, and Anabaptists burnt!” But I am here only concerned with the acts of this wicked tyrant against Catholics, *of which I shall now proceed to give you some examples. In order to force the clergy to acknowledge his new title, he king trumped up a false charge against them, by which he sued them in the courts of law, and accused them of*

having been guilty of treason against himself; and the whole body of the clergy only escaped being condemned at once, by offering a fine of 100,000*l.* for a free pardon: this the king refused to accept, unless they would own him as the "sole protector and supreme head of the Church of England;" which, after some hesitation, they consented to do, only salving their consciences by adding the words, "as far as Christ's law alloweth;"—a clause which afterwards was quietly dropped by the Parliament, when, in 1534, they confirmed the king's title as head of the Church.

Now you will think that the man who could bring in all the clergy of his kingdom guilty of treason at one fell swoop, would not stick at trifles in punishing individuals who opposed his claims. The first victims under these bloody statutes were Fisher Bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More the Chancellor; men worthy of being held in everlasting remembrance by all English Catholics. Fisher was nearly eighty years of age: it was to his care that the king's mother had commended him when young; and there was a time when Henry used to confess that he had not in his kingdom a bishop his equal in saintliness and learning. More was, also, a most faithful servant and subject of the king. But while as citizens and subjects they were true to their king, as Catholics and Christians they were true to the successor of St. Peter. They knew that their Lord and Master had commissioned one of his own Apostles, and not a layman and an earthly king, to feed His flock and to rule His Church. And so, as they would not disclaim the spiritual authority of the See of Rome, they were thrown into prison, and lay there for a year before they were brought to trial. While there, they were allowed scarcely any clothes or books of devotion, or the assistance of a priest; but, in spite of all his sufferings, the venerable bishop declared that "as to the business of the supremacy, he must needs tell his majesty, as he had often told him before, that it was utterly unlawful;" and he warned the king to "*be-ware of taking such title upon him, as he valued his ow soul and the good of his posterity.*" For this he was *condemned*, and ordered to be beheaded. And right &

did he die; for, before he laid his head upon the block, he declared to those who stood by and witnessed the scene, that he came to die for the faith of Christ's holy Catholic Church. And then, after spending a few minutes in prayer, he bowed his head to the stroke of the executioner, who severed it from his body at a single blow. The death of Sir Thomas More was next; and I wish I had space to tell you here all about his most noble and Christian bearing, both in the world, in prison, and at the scaffold. He had served the king long and faithfully, and filled trusts of the highest importance; but he chose rather to be faithful to his God than, by taking an oath of which his conscience could not approve, to retain his position in the world. He saw many, "as well spiritual as temporal" (he tells us himself), who looked upon this oath of the supremacy as but a trifle, and therefore did not refuse to take it; but he adds, "and yet believe I not very surely that every man so *thinketh* that so *saieth* . . . Some may act through favour, and some through fear . . . and some may happen to frame himself a conscience, and think that, while he did it for fear, God would forgive it. And some may, peradventure, think that they will repent and be shriven thereof, and that so shall God remit it them . . . But in good faith, I can use no such ways in so great a matter; but as, if mine own conscience served me, I would not hesitate to do it, even though other men refused, so, though others do it, I dare not, my own conscience standing against it." He was arrested therefore, and thrown into prison; and in prison, though he was not allowed to hear Mass or even to see his confessor, though he was deprived of the company of his children, and debarred from holding communication with his fellow-prisoners, yet his cheerfulness never forsook him, and he talked and wrote in his usual happy strain. "I am the king's true faithful subject and daily beadsman," he says, "and I pray for his highness, and all his and all the realm. I do nobody harm, I say no harm, I think no harm, but wish every body good; and if this be not enough to keep a man alive, in good faith I long not to live" . . . "And then, as I said (this is like a riddle), there is a case in which a man may lose his head and have no harm." After

having been imprisoned for nearly a year and a half, he was brought to trial and condemned; and on the scaffold, not being allowed to say many words to the people, he briefly desired them to pray for him, and to bear witness that he there died in and for the faith of the holy Catholic Church, a loyal servant both of God and the king.

Nor were these the only persons who suffered under Henry for the sake of the Faith. We read of a Carthusian prior named Houghton, and five other priests, who were horribly tortured in prison; and then, the jury being compelled by the threats of Cromwell, the king's vicar-general, to convict them, were hanged, drawn, and quartered at Tyburn, because they said that, so far from acknowledging the king's supremacy, "they would by no means go contrary to the law of God, and the doctrine and consent of their holy mother the Church, in the least matter." Besides these, eight other priests and one layman were put to death upon the scaffold in one year, 1535, for refusing this same oath of supremacy—many of them with most cruel tortures, and others being forbidden the last consolations of their holy religion; while nine or ten more were put into such close confinement, that it proved fatal to all but one of the number, and he lived only to be executed. The next year, the king suppressed five religious houses which had been founded by his father; and of the friars, fifty died from the rigour of their imprisonment. The rack, too, was used for others; and one was strangled with his own girdle, by the executioner, in prison. In 1537, there were executed five abbots, eleven religious, and one secular priest, for the same alleged crime. In 1538 and 1539, there were put to death by this savage monster no less than three abbots, seven religious, eight secular priests, and five laymen; and between 1540 and 1544, two priors, two religious, nine secular priests, five laymen, and Mary Plantagenet, the venerable Countess of Salisbury, the mother of Cardinal Pole, a lady upwards of seventy years of age, and his own near relation: thus making up the number of eighty-three persons who suffered in one king's reign, besides sixty others at least, who died in prison, for denying that sovereign's right to be supreme head of the Church of God in England.

And among these, be it remembered, I have not counted Anne Askew and very many others, both men and women, whom the cruel king put to death for denying an article of the Faith; and this, too, at the very time when he had just cast off his allegiance to the See of Rome, on which that Faith depended. You will remark, too, that I have said nothing in these pages about his other acts of cruelty; how he robbed and destroyed the monasteries both great and small, and lavished on his courtiers the riches which good and holy men had devoted to the service of God and His priests, the support of His poor, and the education of His people. All this I have left out, because I am not now writing a history of the Reformation, but only giving you some account of the penal laws passed and executed against those who desired to remain faithful in the service of their God.

Well, in a few years the tyrant died. He was succeeded by his son, Edward VI., a weak and sickly child of nine years old, who was entirely in the hands of Cranmer and his Protestant friends. He seems to have been a kind-hearted boy; and perhaps, if it had not been for Cranmer, the Protector Somerset, and a few other persons, who upheld the king's supremacy in order to gain the spoils of the abbeys, monasteries, and churches, the Catholics in his reign might have been spared much persecution. But the nobles knew too well in which line their own interests lay. So they got a law passed, by which the property of all chantries, chapels, and hospitals which had been spared by Henry was made over to the king; as well as one which ordered that the bishops should no longer be elected by the deans and chapters of their cathedrals, and confirmed by the Pope, but be appointed simply and solely by the king's letters patent, and that every ecclesiastical process should be made in the king's name only, and sealed only with his seal. They then proceeded to tear down the altars and images in churches throughout the kingdom, and to imprison and *execute great numbers of the clergy who would not give in to their wishes, and allow them to lay their hands on such sacred things.* Several laymen, too, were punished for *keeping fast to the faith of their forefathers.* In Devon-

shire we are told of an officer, at the head of his regiment, finding a priest who would not allow his church to be spoiled, and hanging him from the steeple without trial. In Norfolk, too, many executions took place, and much in the same way. Meanwhile Cranmer and Somerset went on with Henry's old work, and spoiled both churches and bishops' sees of their gold and silver and jewels, which had been left by the tyrant. You could not count up the number of religious houses, shrines, altars, and tombs which were rifled and pillaged in the reign of Edward. The altars were pulled down, and their costly furniture and ornaments, and the copes and other rich vestments of the clergy, together with the crucifixes and jewelled chalices, were sold, and the money given to the guides and guardians of the Protestant king. As an instance of the way in which they dealt with the Church's property, I may mention that seventy manors in Gloucestershire, the property of Westminster Abbey, were given at once as a present to Lord Thomas Seymour. After this, you will not be surprised to hear that, by the end of Edward's short reign of six years, the treasury was involved in debt, and the nation almost ruined, in spite of all the plunder which it had taken from Holy Church: for this is the way in which God often punishes a nation for its sins; the State had plundered what belonged to Almighty God, and therefore they were unable to keep what really belonged to themselves.

But it is time that I should tell you what became during this reign of the poor clergy and others who still clung to the Catholic faith. It fared ill indeed with them. Those priests who had the good fortune to escape being put to death or thrown into prison, were glad to place themselves in gentlemen's houses, and there to take their wages and food, as clerks of the kitchen, purveyors, and receivers. And these were men who had been trained and taught for the sacred office of the priesthood in the monasteries of England, and who for years had been accustomed to serve at the altars of God, and to offer daily the most Holy Sacrifice! During this reign no single penal act that had been passed by the king's father was repealed, and several others were passed besides. Thus, first, it was enacted that if a

one should say that the Pope was the supreme head of the Church, or (what was just the same) that the boy-king was *not* supreme head of it, he should forfeit for the first offence all his goods and chattels, and be imprisoned as long as the king thought fit; for a second offence, he was to lose his lands and be imprisoned for life; and for the third, be deemed guilty of high treason, and hanged, drawn, and quartered. But this was not all. The Catholics were forbidden to use their Missals, or any other books of devotion which were not 'set forth' by the king's authority. And if they kept them, they were to be fined and imprisoned at the king's will. Only conceive the cruelty of these laws, forcing upon the people of England the use of a new *state Prayer-book*. Heavy fines and imprisonment were laid on all those who ventured to speak a word against it, or to use any other form of prayer at all; and this, though, while it profanely claimed to be written under the 'guidance' of God's Holy Spirit, it was all the time compiled partly from Catholic and partly from Protestant sources, by men who were acting from first to last under the 'guidance' and commands of a Parliament who had severed themselves from the See of Rome and the rest of the Christian world, and were engaged in making a new religion of their own. What would Protestant dissenters say if they were now-a-days to be compelled to use this *state Prayer-book* and no other form, and forbidden to speak a word against it? What would they say if now-a-days they were told that if they were even present at any other form of prayer than this, they should be imprisoned six months for the first offence, a year for the second, and for a third during their life?

On the death of Edward, Mary succeeded to the throne, who was, as you know, a Catholic; and as you have heard elsewhere* about her reign, I shall pass on at once to her sister, Queen Elizabeth, who succeeded her. She was a very *artful* and cunning woman, and I do not think that she had *any real care for religion* at all; but she knew that if Catholics and the Pope of Rome were right, she had no just title to the *English throne*, for she was the daughter of Anne

* Nos. 3 and 7.

Boleyn, and was born before the lawful wife of Henry, Queen Catharine, died. Now as she did not care for the Catholic religion itself, of course she became inclined to the side of those who favoured her mother's memory, and consequently her own pretensions. Her courtiers, too, were Protestants, because they did not like to give up their spoils of Church property; and so, after waiting a little while and seeing which way the feeling of the nobles lay, she declared herself in favour of the new religion. It was soon seen in what way she meant to treat the Catholics. The Pope would not pronounce her mother's marriage with King Henry to be valid; and so within three months after her coronation, the Mass was again abolished, and the state liturgy again established by act of Parliament; the queen's supremacy again proclaimed; the oath was tendered to the Catholic Bishops, and all who refused it were driven from their sees; many of the clergy also refused to have any thing to do with the queen as supreme head of the Church, and so they were stripped of their benefices. Henry had cut off the English Church from the See of Rome, but wished to retain Catholic doctrines; Protestant doctrines were established by Edward, and set aside by Mary with the very power which the 'Reformation' had put into her hands; and now, with the help of certain foreigners, and other Protestants who had left the kingdom during Mary's reign, Elizabeth established an external uniformity of Protestant doctrine, together with the state Prayer-book, by means of a code of laws the most bloody and barbarous that ever were passed in any Christian land; so that even the cruelty of Henry's measures was really as nothing in comparison of these. At last, Pope Pius V., after long and fruitlessly trying to induce her to return to the Catholic faith, publicly excommunicated the Protestant queen; and as this act is often alleged in justification of the frightful severities which followed, we shall devote a separate Tract to the consideration of this very important subject. For the present, I shall simply go on with the history, and tell you what was the state of this country under the rule of "good Queen Bess."

It again became high treason to maintain the power and supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. No man could be

any office in the state without taking the oath of supremacy, on pain of *felony*. To embrace the Catholic religion was made treason. All who had children abroad were ordered to send for them home by a certain day, in order that they might be forced to become Protestants. It was high treason for a Jesuit or any Catholic priest to be found in England; it was felony for any one to harbour him in his house or relieve his wants. It was a capital offence to deny the queen's supremacy in things spiritual. It was a crime to hear Mass or be present at Catholic worship; and those who were found guilty were to be fined and imprisoned. If any one carried about on his person a crucifix, an *Agnus Dei*, an image, or any thing blessed by the Pope, he might lose all his goods and be imprisoned for life; and every one was forbidden, under penalty of death, to receive or possess any bull or brief from Rome, or to be absolved from heresy by a Catholic priest. In 1581, the queen and her Parliament went further still; it became high treason to attempt to convert any person whatever from Protestantism to the Catholic faith, or to aid or abet those who did so: for hearing Mass the punishment was one year's imprisonment, and for saying it there was a fine of 200 marks besides: if any one above sixteen years old *absented himself from the State prayers and Protestant worship* in the parish churches, he was to be fined at the rate of 20*l.* per month; and as money was of much greater value then than it is now, such of the Catholic gentry as had not very large fortunes were soon ruined. At last, they came to compound by the year for leave to stay away from Protestant sermons in the parish churches. But even then they were liable to be imprisoned for a year every time that they heard Mass. Is it so very strange, therefore, if Catholics *did* come to Protestant worship in Elizabeth's reign? *Cannot* you tell *why* they came? Do you think that by so doing they acknowledged the English Prayer-book and the state bishops and clergy to be Catholic? As often as there arose a rumour *that the country was going to be invaded from abroad, they were put into prison, and then had to pay for troops for the queen's service.* And when they were discharged from prison, *they were either confined in the house of some Pro-*

testant gentleman, or if they were allowed to go home, *they were liable to forfeit all their goods and lands the moment that they went five miles from their own doors.* Those who had not the money to pay these fines were ordered to quit the country; and if they came back without leave, to suffer death without benefit of clergy.

More yet remains to be told; and after all that you have heard all your life long about the “glorious” reign of “good Queen Bess,” I am afraid you will have some difficulty in believing that what I say is true. Yet I assure you I am but copying from the statute-books of the realm; I am telling you the simple letter of the laws as they were passed—ay, and executed too—against all persons in this land professing the Catholic faith between two and three hundred years ago. In these days every body, Christian, Jew, or Heathen, Catholic or Protestant, is allowed to possess property, and is so far protected by the law; in the days of “good Queen Bess” it was provided (by 29 Eliz. c. 6) that all lands and tenements granted since the beginning of Queen Elizabeth’s reign by any Popish recusant, whereby he and his family are maintained, should be utterly void, as against the queen’s majesty—and every such offender should pay 20*l.* a month, or in default should lose all his goods and two-thirds of his lands. Besides this, it was also enacted by Queen, Lords, and Commons, that all persons who for one month refused to conform to the established religion, or denied the queen’s supremacy in spiritual matters, should be banished from their homes and from all that was near and dear to them, or suffer death in prison or upon the scaffold, as felons and murderers. Those who would not attend the Protestant churches were committed to prison till they chose to conform; and if they persisted in refusing to conform, they were forced to flee the realm, and if they returned they suffered as felons. Nay, so far did the queen’s ministers carry their cruelty, that any one was fined 10*l.* who dared to keep in his house, or even to relieve, a person who for one month absented himself from the parish church.

It would be out of place here to enter upon any detailed account of the martyrs who suffered for the Catholic fa-

during this reign ; of the savage barbarity with which priests and laymen,—yes, and ladies and gentlewomen too,—were racked and tortured and executed for the crime of remaining faithful to the religion of their forefathers. Yet I cannot conclude without saying something on the subject, in order that you may fully understand that the bloody laws of which I have been telling you were no idle threats, but stern realities, most faithfully and relentlessly executed. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to attain accuracy in this matter; nevertheless all historians of credit agree in admitting that the number of persons who suffered the extreme penalty of the law on account of their religious opinions was something very considerable. Camden, though a friend and advocate of Elizabeth, admits that within *ten* years fifty priests were put to death, and fifty-five banished; and during the whole forty-five years of her reign, the names are known of 204 persons who were executed for their religion, of which number 142 were priests, three were gentlewomen; and the rest esquires and yeomen. Besides these, more than ninety priests and Catholic laymen died in prison in the same reign, and more than 100 were sent into perpetual banishment; and if you add to this the number of persons who were fined and stripped of their property, or who were imprisoned for a longer or shorter period, to the utter ruin of their families, you will have some faint idea of what the “Popish persecution” was during that terrible period.

In a future Number I will tell you how this same persecution was continued during later reigns, and even in a certain degree down to the very days in which we live.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY ROBSON, LEVY, AND FRANKLYN,
Great New Street, Fetter Lane.

Entertaining and Instructive Library.

THE CATHOLIC MISSIONARY.

II.

FATHER CLAVER THE APOSTLE OF THE NEGROES.



By Permission.

LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

The Catholic Missionary.

II. FATHER CLAVER THE APOSTLE OF THE NEGROES.*

IF ever there was a time when the Church of God was before the bar of the world, it is the present moment; the eyes of whole nations are watching her every movement, to see if there be matter of accusation against her; their ears are open to catch the slightest evil report against the least of her ministers; the sharpest intellects are on the stretch to convict her of the least inconsistency in practice or theory, and so to brand her wisdom with the name of folly. And oh, how royally, how majestically she bears herself in the trial! Heedless of the clamours which surround her, she carries on her every function as though she were in a time of the profoundest peace. Her ruler is driven from his earthly throne, and in his exile he is preparing to define a doctrine; the palaces of her congregations are surrounded by men thirsting for the blood of her princes, and all the while they are calmly weighing evidence for the beatification of a Saint. Surely the parallel between our Lord and His Church is most complete. They ask her if she assumes an empire over lands or territories. She answers, "My kingdom is not of this world. I have a kingdom, but it is a heavenly one. If I have an

* The Blessed Peter Claver, of the Society of Jesus, was solemnly beatified by a decree of his Holiness Pope Pius IX., dated the sixteenth of July, 1851; and the first public celebration of his feast in this country took place in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street, London, on the ninth of September, 1851, in the presence of his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. The following discourse was delivered on the occasion by the Rev. Father Dalgairns, Priest of the Oratory, London; the text being taken from St. Matthew xi. 19, "Wisdom is justified by her children."

earthly kingdom, it is one for which I forbid my servants to fight; but as for the functions of my own proper kingdom, they must go on without let or hindrance in spite of all your clamours; for a queen I am, and for this end I came into the world." It is one of the most solemn acts of the spiritual empire of the Church which we are met this day to witness. We, my brethren, who have the happiness to be the children of such a mother, are assembled together to justify what in her wisdom she has done. A great society, whose very organisation bears the stamp of heavenly wisdom, which pays the penalty of being called after the name of Jesus, by the glorious privilege of being foremost under persecution and insult, has invited us to celebrate the first feast of another of her children, whom the Church has solemnly declared to be among the blessed in heaven. And to complete the spectacle, a prince of the Church, the new founder of the English hierarchy,—for whom the Roman purple has been strangely transformed into the scarlet robe of Jesus,—comes to honour, in the person of the Blessed Peter Claver, that wisdom of the cross which the world calls folly.

Such is the import of the ceremony in which we call upon you to take part; and, indeed, our task is an easy one; for so far is the act of the Church from requiring a vindication, that, in fact, it justifies itself. It is our joyful privilege to celebrate the praises of a man, the plain narrative of whose life is the best proof of his title to the honours which he receives. In fact, as is the case with all the great servants of God whose memory is blessed, the heroic deeds of Father Claver help to justify the mother which bore him. His life is the vindication of the Company of Jesus, which, while it furnishes confessors to kings and queens, abases itself to be the slave of the slaves of the earth. The great things which he attempted and accomplished serve to vindicate the Catholic Church. If it can be made out, as it certainly can, that the character of this man was such as earth cannot produce; surely it is the mark of heavenly power upon the Church which produced him. She cannot be *Antichrist who is the Mother of Saints*. She must have *within her more than an earthly strength, if she sheds upon her children graces which result in deeds utterly beyon*

the compass of the known powers of nature. And in this instance, let us remember, the proof is the stronger, because it is the case of a man who has really accomplished what mere philanthropy, backed by all the powers of the world, for once legitimately exerted, has signally failed in doing. For, to gather up into a few words the sum and substance of what we have to put before you, the spectacle which we are now to witness is that of a man who, by his single arm, accomplished a task which England has exerted all its legislative wisdom, has covered the ocean with its fleets, to accomplish, and has failed—the humanising of the negro race. Nay more, not only is the result of the work superhuman, but the way in which it was done was superhuman too. What Father Claver did was wrought not by the power of human eloquence, but by the sheer force of sanctity; not by human wisdom, but by the folly of the cross. Surely there can be no better or more practical vindication of the Church of God than this. Above all, the life of the Apostle of the Negroes is the justification of the Providence of God; for the issue of it was the victory over a frightful evil which had long called aloud on God for vengeance—Christians enslaving whole races of men, and inflicting the most grievous wrongs upon them, without giving them the Gospel in exchange. Here we have a man raised up by God to prove that His design in permitting these races to be thus oppressed is to people heaven with them; a man who emulates the fame of St. Francis Xavier, without stirring from the precincts of a single town; who, from his cell in a Jesuits' college, becomes the apostle of whole nations, which from their position seemed almost beyond the reach of the religion of Jesus. Such is the great sight which God calls on the nations to witness, and which we will at once, with the help of God, prepare to exhibit before you.

It is the fate, my brethren, of the powers of the world to promise a great deal and to fail; while it is the characteristic of the Church of God to accomplish much which is *even beyond the sphere that is legitimately her own. She over and over again has practically solved problems which earthly wisdom had in vain exercised itself upon. Thus,*

she does not profess to civilise barbarians, but only to save their souls ; yet in point of fact, in christianising them, she succeeds in educating and humanising them as well. Now, one of the problems which earthly policy has attempted with universal failure is, to establish right relations between civilised men and barbarians. It is the disgrace of European civilisation, that wherever it comes in contact with the savage, it exterminates or brutalises him. Catholic and Protestant states have alike tried their hands at it, and have failed. If ever the former have succeeded, it is only when they have called in the Church to their aid, and have let her do precisely what she would. Look at the New World, my brethren, as it is called, and you will see a proof of what I mean. When Columbus looked down upon the royal plain of Cuba, and saw the primeval forest in all the glory of virgin vegetation, with the smoke of Indian villages peacefully ascending through its trees, he flattered himself that he would convert this simple and happy people ; but in a very few years the work of extermination had so gone on, that the very graves of the Indian race are sought for in vain. The conquerors created a solitude about them, and found that their cruel avarice had overreached itself, since it had destroyed the very beings who were its indispensable ministers. The mines of Potosi and Quito, and the fields of Cuba, were deserted for want of natives to work them. Fortunately for the Spaniards, there existed a race of men, strong and fitted for labour, yet so abject that no one came forward to defend them. Yearly from the coasts of Angola and Guinea thousands of these wretched beings were transferred to the New World. The city of Carthagena was the common market to which all were brought, in order to be transported from thence to the West Indies, or to the mines of Peru. On this one spot, then, on the coast of South America, ten or twelve thousand negroes were landed yearly. Here it was that the Old World, not content with importing its vices into the New, must needs draw out of the very home and centre of its paganism the most degraded forms of superstition, to re-assemble them in *this one devoted city*. At least, you will say, these poor negroes had the inestimable blessings of the Gospel p

sented to them there. But a simple exposition of the difficulties which stood in the way of their conversion will account for the fact why Christianity had as yet made little or no progress among them. So complicated were they, that the stoutest-hearted missionary might well despair ever to break through them. It seemed as if the empire of darkness had in Carthagenæ obtained a victory over the kingdom of Jesus. In the first place, the crowds of negroes perpetually disembarked were so large as to baffle the efforts of any missionary. Year by year their numbers increased; ten or twelve hundred were torn from their homes yearly, and landed at this slave-city of the West. Again, they had no time to become Christians before they were dispersed about the West Indian islands, or else in Mexico and Peru. Not a moment was to be lost; yet each ship-load as it came seemed to require a new effusion of the gift of tongues to convert its wretched cargo, so many and so barbarous were the dialects of Africa. This, however, was not the most serious obstacle: the treatment which they had experienced on the voyage was such, that they came fully prepared to hate the religion of their captors. One of them, on being asked to become a Christian, asked if there were white men in the Christian heaven; and on being told that there were, answered that there could be no joy in such cruel company. Lastly—and it was an obstacle by no means to be despised—the repulsive character of these miserable creatures is to be taken into account. Never had the love of souls of the Church such a trial as this. As for the commiseration of the world, it was far too delicate a flower to live in the empoisoned atmosphere of a slave-ship. When one of these dreadful vessels sailed into the harbour of Carthagenæ, and the hatches were first taken up, such a vapour arose as though the very pit of hell were opened. Hundreds of bodies were pent up there; and if small-pox and fever lent their infection, as was too frequently the case, the hold of the slave-ship was beyond human endurance. No wonder *if curses of the white man and his religion loaded the tainted air.* How could the religion of Jesus penetrate there, since *it was shewn them in such a disguise as that?*

But far away, in the Jesuit noviciate of Tarragona, the

Spirit of God had trained a man who was to put an end to this reproach of Christendom. Already, in joining the Society of Jesus, he had sacrificed nobility of birth, and what the world would call the prospect of a most brilliant career; but there was a deeper depth of humiliation to be gone through. He was to enter on a thankless mission of unparalleled labour, without even the vista of a crown of martyrdom to keep up his strength. Eloquence and gifts of mind, which might have made the world ring again with his praises, were thrown away among brutal savages, whose very language was to the last all but unknown to him. But the prospect could not frighten one whose heart was devoured with the love of Jesus; he asked for and obtained from his superiors the unenvied mission. To the four vows of the professed Jesuit he added a fifth, to become to the end of his days the slave of the negroes. How he kept his vow we shall presently see. As soon as a slave-ship appears in the harbour, Father Claver is informed of it: his eye kindles, and his emaciated countenance wears a look of joy, at the news. It is a ship-load of souls to be saved for Jesus. His first process was to obtain what he called baits to catch his negroes. "I must speak to them with my hands before I do so with my lips," he used to say. Laden with biscuits and preserves, he goes off to the vessel. Oh, in what a beautiful shape did Christianity first appear among those poor creatures! Through the loathsome air he struggles down. His first care is to discover if any children have been born during the voyage, and he baptises them. He then looks around him for the sick; and the dying negro, whose infectious ulcers have been an object of horror even to his fellow-captives, suddenly feels the father's arms entwined around his body, while a handkerchief steeped in wine refreshes his feverish face. Many a one baptised by the father in this dreadful place, quitted the hold of the slave-ship for the beatific vision in heaven. He turns to the mass of human beings close pressed around him, and watching with wondering eye this novel scene. There seems a magic sympathy between the father and his negroes. *The sullen savage ceases to brood over his wrongs, and his heart understands that of Father Claver at a glance.*

hours had passed over his head. The interval of rest was not a long one ; at two he was there again, as that was the hour appointed for the negresses. The mosquitoes swarmed around him, so that he was sometimes covered with blood from their stings. Towards six o'clock in the evening he heard the men's confessions, till the college-gates compelled him to leave off his labours. Then, and not till then, he went away ; and often so weary and exhausted was he, that he staggered when he left his seat, and was borne fainting from the church. When Easter came, his only relaxation was to leave the town to seek for the negroes scattered among the mountains which overhang it ; this was the only time when he ever set foot beyond its gates. He only exchanged the hot streets of the city for more laborious ground. On foot he climbed mountain-sides, or waded through marshes and ravines. The rain fell in torrents and drenched him to the skin, and the lightning of tropical storms flashed around him ; but on he marched, to seek for souls in that wild country. On arriving at a negro settlement, he planted a cross and assembled the slaves around it, or else in the chapel, after their work was over, and preached to them with a crucifix in his hand. He established himself in the poorest negro-hut that he could find, and never quitted the place as long as there was any one left to be brought to the Sacrament of Penance. At one time he suddenly broke away from the house of a Spaniard where he was staying, and plunged deep into the recesses of the mountains. He marched on through wild and impracticable roads ; no one knew how he could find his way, for he took no guide. When he came back, pale and wan from fatigue, he was gently reproached for his imprudence ; his only reply was, that there were three souls to be saved. Afterwards it was discovered that he had gone to administer the last Sacraments to three old negroes, who had been abandoned by all the world, and had crawled into a ruined hut to die. But it was not in the forest or on the mountain that God meant Father Claver to be a missionary ; his proper home was in *the town*. And be sure, that without ever following his *brethren up the sides of the Andes, or striving to extend the kingdom of the cross along the banks of the Amazon,*

there was work enough in Carthagera to win for him the name of an Apostle. Unfortunately it requires no stretch of imagination for us to conceive what a plague-spot on the face of God's earth is a wicked city, how it sucks up into itself the pestilential gatherings of a country's guilt. But as for the town in which God's providence had placed Father Claver, it seemed as if the concentrated wickedness of earth had poured its bitter waters into that one devoted spot. Each nation in the world brought its quota to the mighty whole. The white man came with all the refined vices of civilisation, while the negro imported from the wilderness all the burning and unbridled lusts of a son of the desert. It was at a critical moment that God chose to place Father Claver there.

The seas which wash the shores of South America were the battle-field on which the powers of Europe were at that moment contending for the mastery. On the waters of that mysterious ocean which contains the West Indian islands, the fleets of every nation were gathered together; and hardly an islet in its whole expanse but was the home of an English pirate. Carthagera was the central point of the struggle, and all nations found their way into its streets. The English Protestant, the Pagan, and the Mahometan entered there into an unholy alliance with the bad Catholic to outrage the majesty of God. It was there, then, at the very point where the wickedness of two worlds met together, that God placed Father Claver; and there was energy enough in his single heart to make him the apostle of them both. He seemed to haunt that city like a very spirit. If the wild music which they brought from Africa tempted the negroes to join in the lascivious dance, the Father's form suddenly appeared among them, and they fled at his approach. Nay, it happened at times that if a negro approached a negress in the streets, and words of evil intent were spoken between them, all on a sudden, with the cry "Father Claver is coming!" they would break away from each other, though the bystanders looked around and saw no Father Claver there. When the lash was about to descend mercilessly on the trembling slave, as though he knew by instinct where his negroes were suffering, his appearance arrested th

uplifted arm. Oh, what a check it was to sin to have such a man within the walls of the city! His very form, when, under the intolerable rays of a burning sun, he begged in the market-place for his negroes, was a protest against sin for the whole population of that crowded town. The white man felt his power fully as much as the black; and Father Claver's voice, preaching in some public square when the flood of sin grew stronger than usual, found a response from one end of the city to the other. Nay, to the very extremity of the West Indies, the lovely islands, spoiled by the wickedness of men, echoed to the Father's name. One and all, down to the very buccaneer, bowed to the mighty influence which thrilled through the channels of the sea; and the astonished Englishman, arrested in his career of rapine and of guilt, found the goodness of God impersonated in Father Claver. Truly God is most merciful, even when He seems most mysterious in His severity, and His saints are the channels of His mercy. It is in towns, the strongholds of sin, that He most of all delights to shew His goodness; and when their wickedness cries for vengeance to Him, His sweet revenge is to send a saint to be their apostle. One man is quite enough to grapple with the sins of the New World and the Old conjoined, if he only bear in his heart the Spirit of Almighty God. That, and that alone, can do it. If there had been no stronger power than mere philanthropy in Father Claver's mind, it could never have carried him through the complication of mighty evils which he had to face. No theory of the rights of man would have had enough of God in it to have supported him under the undignified monotony of his labours, to have borne him triumphantly through the selfish vice of the white man and the brutality of the black. Oh! believe me, my dear brethren, if he had seen nothing more in the African race than sons of Adam, he would never have loved them with the unutterable love which burnt within him. But it was the love of souls, it was the mysterious instinct of the new-born heart, which led him on through his super-human travail. It threw itself out in strange incomprehensible ways. He kissed their ulcers, and their poisonous breath was a very balm to him, so certain is it that nature

was not the source of his love; since at every step of his life among the negroes its every sense was shocked and mortified. It was the conquering power of grace which bore him on; the liberty of the Gospel was his war-cry, and it led him to achieve exploits to which the love of earthly freedom has proved itself unequal. If you would wish to know the secret and the source of his power, it was that a spark from the Heart of Jesus had set his soul on fire, and burned steady and unconsuming, where an earthly flame would have blazed up fiercely, and then smouldered away. The only adequate explanation of his unheard-of toils was that he saw in each swarthy negro a child of Jesus and Mary. Long ago there was One who wept over a wicked town, and then in the narrow circle of the garden shed blood enough under the olive-trees to redeem the world; and this alone will explain to you how it was that Father Claver sat himself down within the walls of the Jesuits' college, and by the sheer force of sanctity deserved the glorious title of Apostle of Carthagená, of the West Indies, and of the Negro race.

All that has hitherto been said is quite enough to shew you that the work which Father Claver performed was supernatural, because it was such as the ordinary powers of man could not have accomplished; and in proving this to you, my brethren, I have already said quite enough to vindicate the Church of God even to the world before which she needs justification. But there remains still a further portion of my task, though a shorter one, which concerns you as well as the world. We are all of us, in looking at any great good effected by the saints of God, but too apt to stop at the mere material work achieved by them, and to forget the mode in which they accomplished it. Now in order to continue and confirm what has already been advanced, it appears from the history of this blessed man, that not only was what he accomplished superhuman, but the very means by which he wrought it were such as heavenly wisdom alone could have suggested to him. It is the characteristic of Almighty God, that not only does He do great things, but that He brings them out of nothing. It is the glory of God to draw strength out of weakness, and to

bring to pass the most supernatural events by means which seem below the dignity of nature. Man requires independence of mind, eloquence, and magnanimity, as the condition of doing any thing great; God works by obedience, simplicity, and humility. Now that we have seen what Father Claver did, let us compare with the wonderful result the mode in which he worked. We shall find in the very outset of his life enough to shew us that every step bears the marks of a character which the Spirit of God alone could have wrought within him.

Go into the Jesuits' college at Majorca in the year 1609; you will find two of its inmates walking together in the garden, for they are constant companions. One of them is a young novice, the other an old man evidently sinking into the grave. They are in earnest converse; and if you watch them attentively, you will see that the young man's eye is kindling at the words which his companion utters. You will wonder what can be the attraction which binds together two men so dissimilar in years. You imagine that it must be some old Father on whose eloquent lips kings and nobles have hung in rapture. But you are much mistaken if you think so; it is Alfonso Rodriguez, the porter-brother of the college, and the young novice is Peter Claver. Approach, and hearken to their conversation. The prophetic eye of the aged man has already seen the vocation to which God destines his young disciple. He knows by revelation that he is to be the apostle of the West Indies, and he is preparing him for his work. Listen to him: he rings the changes on three words,—self-denial, obedience, and humility. These three words are the key-note of Father Claver's life; they never left his mind. They haunted him in the slave-ship and in the sultry squares of the city; they pursued him across the Atlantic into his cell in the Jesuits' college of Carthagena.

Father Claver's labours for the day are over; the college-gates are closed, and no negroes can come to confession. *You think he is gone to refresh himself by sleep after his long day's work; but approach his room, and you will soon be undeceived. Far into the night he remains on his knees before a crucifix, communing with Jesus; then suddenly he rises*

up, and taking a discipline in his hand, he scourges himself till his emaciated body is covered with blood. Or at times, when the whole college is buried in sleep, the door opens, and a pale, wan figure issues into the silent corridor, with blood dripping from the crown of thorns on his brow, and a heavy cross upon his shoulder, traversing the most solitary parts of the house, as though he were following Jesus to Calvary. Who could suppose that this is he who has staggered and fallen on quitting his confessional, and been carried into the house from the church, because his feeble limbs were unable to bear his sinking frame! Or again, see him in the day-time traversing the streets of the city on some errand of mercy or to save some dying soul; his step is so light that his companion cannot keep pace with him; yet each movement costs him unutterable pain, for his whole body is bound round with horse-hair ropes and iron points which pierce his flesh. Oh, why all this waste of human blood and pain? why punish that innocent body? why not let the wicked suffer for their own sins? This is human reasoning; but the Blessed Father Claver is taking up the Cross of the spotless Lamb, who, because He was sinless, was offered up as a victim for sinners. And so well was this understood, that when a dreadful earthquake ravaged a neighbouring town, and did not reach the city where he dwelt, the very boys in the streets sang a rude chant, implying that for Claver's sake God spared Carthage.

Or again, the very secret of human success is, that a man should be bent on his work with such a tenacious will that no power on earth can wean him from it. It is not so with the work of God. Alas, how often do we spoil it by loving it for its own sake, for the natural excitement which we find in it, instead of for the love of God! But as for the saints, let but the will of God manifest itself, and they give it up; for God, and not the good which they do, is their all in all. At one moment the Jesuits had enemies at Carthage; and they take advantage of the arrival of a new visitor-general to prefer against Claver a false charge of *reiterating Baptism*. A mandate arrives at the college forbidding him any longer to confer the Sacrament of Baptism

Oh, my brethren, what a trial for Father Claver ! If he had been in his heart a single drop of natural feeling, unrefined by the grace of God, it would have shewn itself then. His only joy was to pour the waters of regeneration on his dear negroes ; and now this was forbidden him. But though he loved them well, and would have shed the last drop of his blood for them, yet he loved the will of God still more. Without a murmur he submitted, and baptised no more till the false charge had been cleared away and his superiors were undeceived. Never, in all his life had he such a trial as this ; and never, in his whole wonderful career, was he more like Him who longed for His cross, yet put it off till the moment appointed by His Father came.

My brethren, enough has been said to prove the point with which we began. The plain recital of Father Claver's life has brought out before you a character such as ear and eye cannot produce—the character of the saints of God. Everlasting praise be to Jesus, who never has abandoned His Church, but raises up saints within her to the end of time. “The arm of the Lord is not shortened.” Thanks be to God, who has given a new strength to His Church, since every saint whom she places on her altars augments the resources of her children, and their power of intercession with Him. It is a joyful thing now, for the first time in public, to call upon this blessed saint with all the sanctification of the Holy See. “Blessed Peter Claver,” may we say of him, “help us by thy prayers, since our apostolate lies like thine, amidst the streets and lanes of a wicked city. Oh, do thou obtain for us that gift which alone will convert this miserable country, the gift of sanctity. Spread the kingdom of Jesus in this mighty empire, that England may be known again by the glorious names which once were hers, the ‘Dower of Mary’ and the ‘Isle of Saints.’”

Library of Christian Doctrine.

PROTESTANTISM WEIGHED

IN ITS OWN BALANCE,

AND FOUND WANTING.

No. VI.

THE SUPREMACY OF ST. PETER.



By Permission.

LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

Protestantism Weighed.

VI. THE SUPREMACY OF ST. PETER.

EVERY one knows that in the religion of Catholics a certain degree of pre-eminence of some kind or other is given to the Church of Rome; so much so, that the Catholic Church throughout the world is often called, both by friends and foes, the Roman Church, or Church of Rome; and we who belong to that Church in this country are very commonly spoken of not merely as Catholics, but as *Roman Catholics*. Indeed, this it is which is made a subject of reproach against us by politicians and others, that we acknowledge our dependence upon some place or power *in foreign parts*, as they say; and Protestants generally are in the habit of asking, with some degree of triumph, what texts we can find in holy Scripture to warrant this superiority or supremacy thus attributed to the Church of Rome.

In the following pages I am not going to enter fully upon this subject in all its details; but, in accordance with the plan that has been followed throughout this series, I shall call your attention to certain portions of holy Scripture, of which Protestants are unable to give any sufficient explanation, or rather (to speak more truly) to which they do the very utmost violence, because they do not hold the Catholic faith upon the subject to which they refer.

Now you know, of course, that the foundation of the pre-eminence which the Catholic attributes to the Church of Rome is this: that it was over that Church that St. Peter presided as Bishop; and that St. Peter had received from our Blessed Lord a special commission to rule over the whole Church; which commission was to be held *throughout all future ages* by those who should succeed to him in *his bishopric*, just as the general commission given to all the Apostles to go and teach all nations, and to baptise them, was to be held in like manner by all those who should

be deputed to execute it even to the end of time. This, I say, is the Catholic belief. We reverence, in a special manner, the Church of Rome, not because Rome was once the metropolis of the world, but because it was once the See of St. Peter; and because we believe that Christ gave to St. Peter and to his successors a special commission over the whole of His faithful people, that they should rule over them in His name and stead, in order to preserve the faith in its purity, and to keep the whole Christian family in the bonds of unity. This belief all Protestants reject. It is precisely this that they protest against; and innumerable arguments have been used to prove that it is false. The only one, however, with which we are at present concerned is that which professes to be founded upon holy Scripture, and may be briefly stated thus: St. Peter never received any special commission over and above the rest of the Apostles. Many Protestants, indeed, say a great deal more than this: they say that our Blessed Lord never gave a commission to any of the Apostles to rule over His Church at all, in the way in which Bishops rule over it now; that Episcopacy is as much a corruption of the pure simplicity of the Gospel, and an usurpation of the liberty of Christian people, as Popery itself. But at present I am not speaking of these persons. I am addressing those who believe, or at least profess to believe, that our Lord set up a kingdom upon earth, which kingdom is His Church; that He appointed His twelve Apostles to be its rulers, and that the Bishops are the successors of those Apostles; but who deny that He put any difference between one Apostle and another; who say that they all received the same equal authority from Christ; and therefore, that all Bishops at the present day, being in fact the representatives of the Apostles, have also equal authority one with another; none has by divine right a higher place or degree than another. This is the creed of the principal Protestant sect in this country, the Established Church; and it is this of which I am now going to speak, and to shew that here, as elsewhere, Protestants are obliged to pass over and take no notice of, or at least thoroughly to explain away, a great many passages of holy Scripture in order to make good their assertion.

1. First, then, I would have you to observe the very remarkable words which our Lord addressed to St. Peter on the first occasion on which He saw him (St. John i. 41, 42): "Andrew findeth his brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, Thou *art* Simon, the son of Jona; thou *shalt be* called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone" [or a rock, or Peter]. Then, on a future occasion, He fulfilled this promise or prophecy, saying (Matt. xvi. 17, 18), "Simon Barjona [or son of Jona], I say unto thee that thou *art* Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church." Thus you see that our Blessed Lord changed the name of this Apostle from Simon to Peter. Now this is not the only instance recorded in holy Scripture in which Almighty God vouchsafed to change the names of men, and to assign to them other names different from what they originally had; and if you consider what the other instances are, you will observe that, together with the new name, Almighty God also vouchsafed some peculiar grace corresponding to that name. Thus, when He changed the name of Abram into Abraham, which signifies "the father of a great multitude," He distinctly said, "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, *for* a father of many nations have I made thee" (Gen. xvii. 5). Again, He changed the name of Sarai into Sarah, or "princess," because she was to be "a mother of nations, and kings of people should be of her" (ibid. 16). And yet once more, He changed the name of Jacob into Israel, or a "prince of God;" and the reason is straightway given, "because as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Gen. xxxii. 28). All this Protestants believe as well as Catholics—indeed, the language of holy Scripture speaks for itself—yet they deny, that when our Lord changed the name of Simon into that of Peter, or "rock," He conferred upon him any peculiar grace or privilege corresponding to that name, any signal pre-eminence *whatever whereby he was to be distinguished above other men; and this, though at the very time when our Lord gave this new name He gave also an explanation of it, "*

say unto thee that thou art Peter ; and upon this rock I will build My Church."

2. But let us look more closely into this explanation, given by our Lord Himself, of this name of Peter. The whole passage stands as follows (Matt. xvi. 15-18) : "Jesus saith to them, But whom say ye that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona ; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter ; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Something of the force of this passage is lost in our English translation ; but you will understand it better when I tell you, that in the Syriac language, in which our Blessed Lord spoke, the same word is used both for "Peter" and for "rock," just as it is in French also at the present day ; so that you may read the passage thus : "Thou art Cepha ; and upon this Cepha I will build my Church." It is impossible, then, to distort this passage, as some Protestants would fain do, so as to apply the first part of it to St. Peter, and the second to our Lord Himself, or to something else *not* St. Peter. It is acknowledged by the most learned and candid even among Protestants themselves, that the whole address belongs to the Apostle ; and it declares the will of Christ to make him in some way or other the rock or foundation upon which He would build His Church, the immovable stone whereby the whole fabric was to be kept firm for ever, and held together even to the end of the world. It is objected, however, by Protestants—first, that Jesus Christ alone is the foundation of the Church ; and secondly, that the Church is built on all the Apostles, not on St. Peter only. At one time they quote the language of St. Paul (1 Cor. iii. 11), "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ ;" and at another time they quote from the same Apostle (Eph. ii. 20), "Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, *Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone ;*" or, again, from the Apocalypse (xxi. 14), "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of

twelve Apostles of the Lamb." If, then, it is objected to us by these Protestant controversialists, all the twelve Apostles are the foundation of the Church, how can you attribute this title to St. Peter in particular? And if St. Paul says that no man can lay any other foundation than our Lord, how dare you say that St. Peter has been laid as the foundation? But, in truth, it is not the Catholic mode of interpreting Scripture to overthrow one passage by another, but, on the contrary, to receive all. Since, then, we see clearly that Scripture teaches us there is no other foundation than our Lord, and that the same Scripture teaches us that St. Peter also is the foundation *in his manner*, and, further, that all the Apostles are the foundation in *their manner*, we will not take the first teaching to weaken the second, nor the second to destroy the third, but we will maintain them all in their integrity. And, first, we acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the one foundation of the Church—the foundation and the founder, the foundation without any other foundation, the foundation in and by Himself. Next, we acknowledge St. Peter also to be the foundation—the foundation, but not the founder; the foundation, but himself founded on another, which is Christ; a foundation not *other than* his Divine Master, but built upon and in dependence on Him;—just as Protestants themselves do not scruple to call their ministers by the name of pastors or shepherds, though Jesus Christ is in truth “the great Shepherd of the sheep,” “the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls”—nay, He is even “*the one Shepherd*” (Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Pet. ii. 25; St. John x. 16)—and yet, I say, Protestants do not hesitate to call these others shepherds, because they are not separate from Him and *other than* Him, but *under* Him. Lastly, we acknowledge all the Apostles in general to be the foundation of the Church, because by their preaching they converted the world to the Christian faith, and brought the nations of the heathen into the true fold. As regards their labours in preaching and the doctrine which they *taught*, they are the foundation of the Church equally with *St. Peter*; as regards their power and authority of government, they are so unequally, or only in subordination to him: for as it would be contrary to Scripture to say that

all the Apostles in general were not the foundation of the Church, so also it would be contrary to Scripture to say that St. Peter was not the foundation in a special and peculiar manner.

3. But our Blessed Lord set forth the position which St. Peter was to hold in His Church or kingdom, not only by speaking of him as the rock on which it was to be built, but also, under another figure, as the steward who was to hold the keys. His promise was this: "I say unto thee that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 18, 19). Now, we know that when a man leaves his house, and leaves the keys thereof in the hands of another, this is as much as to say that he leaves to that other the charge and government of his house during his absence. When kings and princes make any solemn entry into the principal cities of their state, the keys of those cities are presented to them as an acknowledgment of their sovereign authority. We should naturally understand, therefore, that in the passage before us our Lord promises to St. Peter the supreme authority over His Church; and, in fact, we find that the very same terms are used in other places of holy Scripture to denote the same thing. Thus, in the Apocalypse (i. 18), our Lord says of Himself, "I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." What is meant by Christ having the keys of death and hell but the supreme authority which He has over both? And, again, when Almighty God commits the government of His temple to Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah, He does so in these words (Isaiah xxii. 21, 22): "I will commit thy government into his hands, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And *the key of the house of David* will I lay *upon his shoulder*; so he shall open, and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open." Observe the striking correspondence between what is here said of Eli-

and what our Lord says of St. Peter; and if we are to follow the Bible and the Bible only, must we not conclude, that as Eliakim, son of Hilkiab, was hereby made head in the Mosaic temple, so Simon, son of Jona, was in like manner made head in the Evangelical Church?

But it is objected that our Lord Himself explained what He meant by the grant of the keys in those words that follow, "And whatsoever thou shalt bind," &c.; and that He afterwards promised the very same thing to all the Apostles, saying in the plural number, "Whatsoever *ye* shall bind," &c. (Matt. xviii. 18.) If then, it is objected, He promised to all the Apostles generally what He here promises to St. Peter in particular, there is no reason for saying that St. Peter received any superiority over the others by virtue of this promise. That is to say, Protestants would fain overthrow one Scripture by another, according to their usual practice; and in doing so, they entirely omit to give any account of the plain and important fact, that St. Peter received *first* and *by himself* what the others only received afterwards and when all were assembled together. Catholic interpreters, on the other hand, are under no temptation to offer violence to the sacred text, but freely allow its full and proper value to every part of it; teaching us that to St. Peter was given in its fulness what the rest of the Apostles received only in a measure and in dependence on him: moreover, that it is not altogether the same thing to promise the keys, and to say, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;" and bidding us observe that it is only these last words that were common to Peter and the others. The promise of the keys was given singly to Peter, and never to any others; and this promise imports a great distinction and superiority. Do you ask whether this superiority consists, and what is the difference between holding the keys, and binding and loosing? We answer the same difference that there is between having the *property* of a thing and having only the *use* of it; and *you will allow*, is a very essential difference, and confers *great superiority* upon him who has the property. To *bind and to bind* signify only the action and exercise of a *power*; to *hold the keys* signifies the habitual ownership

of that power. It was fitting that the Apostles, who were to plant the Church throughout the whole world, should have full power to *use* the keys; and it was fitting also, (may we not even say that it was necessary for the sake of unity?) that one among them should by office and dignity have the custody of those keys. This, then, is the difference between the promise made by our Lord to St. Peter, and that which He made to the other Apostles. *They* have by delegation and in use only, what *he* has as owner and proprietor as it were; the other Apostles had full share in the use of the keys, but St. Peter *in person* received them for the advantage of all.

4. Let us next consider another charge delivered by our Lord to St. Peter, whereby he is appointed supreme pastor and ruler over the whole flock of Christ. It was after our Lord's resurrection, and on the third occasion on which He shewed himself to His disciples after that event, that He saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? and he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep" (St. John xxi. 15-17). Now I suppose nobody will deny that to feed the sheep is to have charge of the flock. In holy Scripture, to rule and to feed the people are taken for the same thing. David was elected king, and he is spoken of as chosen "to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance; so he fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands" (Psalm lxxviii. 71, 72). And again, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him... *He shall feed His flock like a shepherd*" (Isaiah l. 10). To have charge of feeding the flock is to be its pastor or shepherd, and shepherds have full power over the

by one; you content yourself with nourishing well the root, and are confident that all the rest will then be in safety, because the root distributes the moisture to every part of the plant. Even so our Blessed Lord, having planted this holy congregation of His disciples, watered the root, that so the water of the living faith might not fail in him, but he might strengthen and refresh the rest. He prayed for St. Peter in particular, but it was for the general benefit of the whole Church. St. Peter himself was confirmed in the faith, and received the power of confirming the faith of all the others; a power which ecclesiastical history shews us to have been perpetuated ever since in a most wonderful manner, in that long succession of Bishops who have filled "the chair of Peter," from the days of St. Linus, the second Pope, down to our present most holy Father, Pope Pius the Ninth.

6. The next point in holy Scripture to which I would invite your attention upon this subject, is the language which is used by the Evangelists when speaking of St. Peter. It is a most remarkable circumstance, which, however, you may never perhaps have taken notice of, that the holy Evangelists never name either all the Apostles or a part of them, without placing St. Peter at the *head* of the company. This cannot be supposed to be merely accidental, so to speak, and without reason, for it is a constant thing with the sacred writers; they have not done it four or five times only, but always. With regard to the *other* Apostles, they do not always observe the same order, but St. Peter always stands *first*. Thus in the several catalogues or lists of the sacred college, "the names of the twelve Apostles are these; *the first*, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother," &c. (Matt. x. 2. See also Mark iii. 16; Luke vi. 14; Acts i. 13.) You see that St. Matthew has here named St. Andrew as the second, but St. Mark names him as the fourth; and still further to shew that the order of the other eleven is indifferent, St. Luke names him second in *one place* and fourth in another. The only observance of *rank* in which they all agree is, that St. Peter always comes *first*; and it is worth noticing too that St. Matthew distinctly says "*the first*, Simon," and does not say "the

second, Andrew, the third, James," &c., but goes on simply with their names; yet St. Peter was certainly *not* the first who was called, but his brother Andrew; why, then, is St. Peter preferred before him and called "the first?"

And further, very often when the Evangelists speak of the apostolic company, they name St. Peter *only*, and speak of the rest as "having been with him;" a form of speech which, it is scarcely necessary to observe, naturally marks the person named as the most conspicuous, and the rest as his inferiors; especially when it is observed that it is *always* the same person who is thus singled out for express mention and never classed with the others; I mean, that where *any* name at all is mentioned, it is always St. Peter's: thus, "Simon and they that were with him followed after Jesus" (Mark i. 36); "Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep" (Luke ix. 32); "Peter and the other Apostles answered and said" (Acts v. 29; see also verses 2, 3; ii. 37; iii. 4, 12, &c.). Even the angel who sat in our Lord's empty sepulchre, when Mary Magdalene and the rest came to anoint His body,—even he, I say, a messenger from heaven, used the very same form of speech; he said to the women, "Go your way, tell His disciples and Peter" (Mark xvi. 7). Why was this? Was not Peter a disciple, that he should be mentioned separately? was he less? was he more? was he equal with the others? If he was equal with them (and no one in his senses will say that he was less), why, then, is he mentioned apart? If he had no special prerogative, why is it not said, "Tell His disciples and Andrew," or "John?" I know, indeed, that the imagination of our adversaries is fertile in devising various pretexts which shall account for this pre-eminence thus uniformly conceded to St. Peter, as, that he was eldest among the Apostles (which it would be extremely difficult to prove), or that he enjoyed some other small advantage of natural character and abilities, of which we know nothing. But it must be observed that all this is pure imagination; it is not told us in Scripture, and our adversaries profess to go entirely by Scripture. St. John is named in holy Scripture as "the beloved disciple;" so that if St. Peter had really been remarkable for *any* of those things which Protestants pretend, we might

have expected that this also should have been revealed to us, whereas something else is revealed to us about him which Protestants reject. It is revealed to us that it was on Peter that Jesus Christ founded His Church, as upon a rock ; that it was he to whom He committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; that it was he who was commissioned to feed and rule the Christian fold ; finally, that it was he for whose faith our Lord prayed that it might not fail, and who was appointed to confirm the faith of his brethren. All this, I say, is revealed to us in holy Scripture, and, in *our* opinion at least, is very good reason for his being placed and called "the first," for his being named alone, apart from the other Apostles, and for the others being only spoken of collectively, as having been "with him."

7. The same is to be said also concerning the last class of passages which I shall mention from holy Scripture, viz. those in which St. Peter is seen taking the lead of the other Apostles on occasions of general interest and great importance after our Lord's ascension into heaven ; as, for instance, immediately after that event, in the election of an Apostle to succeed to the apostate Judas : "in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, Men and brethren, . . . one must be ordained to be a witness with us," &c. (Acts i. 15, 22). Again, no sooner have the Apostles received the promised gift of the Holy Ghost, than St. Peter begins at once, as chief and captain of the apostolic band, to deliver the message of salvation to the people. The other Apostles were there, and were appealed to by the people to tell them what they should do ; but it was St. Peter only who spoke for all : "Peter, standing up with the eleven, said, Ye men of Juda," &c. "When they heard this, they said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles." . . . "Then Peter said unto them" (Acts ii. 14, 41). Presently, the gift of miracles granted to the Church is to be manifested in exercise ; and although St. John, "the beloved disciple," is there as well as St. Peter, yet it is St. Peter only, and not St. John, who says, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk" (Acts iii. 1, 6). So too with the sword of punishment ; when this is to be drawn for the first time, and to inflict a capital sentence,

it is St. Peter who directs the blow. Ananias and Sapphira bring certain money "and lay it *at the Apostles' feet* ; but *Peter* said," &c. (Acts v. 2, 3). Nor is the case different when error and heresy first make their appearance within the fold. Simon Magus believes and is baptised, and then falls into deadly error ; and it is St. Peter who says unto him, "Thy money perish with thee" (Acts viii. 20). By and by, the fulness of time is come that the Gentiles also should have the Gospel preached to them ; and it is to St. Peter that the revelation is first made, as general-in-chief of all the labourers, and steward of the harvest. Lastly, when the Apostles and elders come together to the first General Council to consider of an important matter which has given rise to "no small dissension and disputation," Peter opens the way to the judgment and definition ; his sentence is followed by the others, and his particular revelation serves as law to the whole Church. All these are facts recorded in holy Scripture ; and holy Scripture, we are assured by Protestants, is their only guide in all matters of faith. We turn, then, to Protestant commentators upon these histories to see what they have to say about them, and we read that all these things came to pass, not because St. Peter had been specially commissioned to feed the flock, not because he was the rock on which the Church was built, and bore the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but because he was a very active and stirring man, "in all deliberations nimble at propounding his advice, and in all undertakings forward to make the onset." Can any thing be more flagrant than the wilful disrespect thus shewn to the written Word of God, and the preference given to the opinions and prejudices of men ? And in all that has here been said, it must be remembered that we have only brought forward such passages as cry aloud and speak for themselves, if we may be allowed to use such an expression ; passages which seem plainly and directly to teach the supremacy of St. Peter, and which Protestants, therefore, who will not admit that supremacy, are bound to explain and to account for in some other way. We need hardly add, that to a Catholic, holding the *doctrine of this pre-eminence* of St. Peter over the other *Apostles*, and believing it to be an essential feature in the

government of Christ's kingdom upon earth, holy Scripture abounds with allusions and incidents which implicitly contain it, but which want of space forbids us to enter upon at this time. What, then, is the state of the case as far as it has been hitherto laid before you upon the whole of this very important subject? Here are a number of passages taken out of the Word of God, so plain, yet at the same time so remarkable in themselves and so consistent with one another, that one can scarcely imagine a person reading them with common thoughtfulness and attention, and not being struck by their manifest agreement with the statement of Catholic doctrine which I laid before you at starting; one can hardly imagine, I say, a candid mind drawing any other conclusion from them than that the doctrine of Catholics upon this subject at least is positively contained in holy Scripture; yet so it is, that prejudice refuses to see even in so clear a light. Though in the written Word of God St. Peter ever speaks for all; though he is ever first; though Jesus Christ gives him in the most solemn manner a new name, the name of a rock; though He distinctly promises to build His Church upon that rock; though He commits to him the keys of heaven; though He exacts from him a threefold declaration of his exceeding love, and then gives him an especial charge to feed His flock; though He prays for him and for him alone, because he is to be the strengthener of his brethren; though in the first opening of the Gospel he is seen to take the most prominent part, and the other Apostles follow him, as before they followed Christ;—though all these things be written in the Word of God concerning him so plainly that none can deny it, yet he is not to be accounted the head of the Apostles, or in any way superior to them, because this would be to destroy the very foundation of Protestantism; he is therefore to be considered only as one of the twelve, equal to his brethren in all things.

Such is the vaunted obedience of Protestants to “the Bible and the Bible only.”

NOTE. The arguments of this Tract are slightly altered and abridged from the writings of St. Francis de Sales upon the same subject.

Library of Christian Doctrine.

E INTENTION OF THE MINISTER

Necessary

FOR THE VALID ADMINISTRATION OF THE
SACRAMENTS.



By Permission.

LONDON:

JRNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

1852.

[Price 1

THE
Intention of the Minister necessary,

ETC.

IN the Catholic Church for the performing of a true Sacrament three things are necessary: 1. that the right *matter* be used; 2. that the right *form* of words be spoken; and 3. that the minister *intend* to do what the Church does. Thus, for the Sacrament of Baptism water and no other liquid must be applied; while, at the same time, the following form of words is uttered: "I baptise thee in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and besides this, the person who ministers must intend to do that religious act which the Church calls Baptism, otherwise it is not a Sacrament, but a mere washing with water.

Now Protestants think this requirement of the Church both foolish and wicked. Of course, as in all other things so in this, they put their own construction on the Church's doctrine, and even pretend to know what it means better than the Church herself does. Indeed, so fully are they possessed with their own notions, that they seem positively incapable of understanding any explanation that is offered them. The reason of this will appear more plainly as I proceed; at present I will only observe that it seems mainly to arise from Protestants not being in the habit of regarding spiritual things as realities; for absurd as they think the Catholic doctrine to be, and incapable as they seem of taking in the simplest idea of it, they do themselves admit and maintain the necessity of intention in matters which *are* realities to them, that is to say, such as have to do *with the affairs and interests of this life*.

Take marriage, for instance. Every body will allow that *the persons who go through the ceremony must really*

mean to marry each other ; nobody fancies you can find yourself married without having intended it. Be the ceremony performed externally with all the solemnity imaginable, let the words of betrothal be correctly spoken, and the ring placed on the legitimate finger ; yet if the parties have no thought of marrying, and enact the whole thing by way of a joke, nobody would look upon the proceeding as any thing else than a mock-ceremony. Decent Christians might very well regard it as a piece of profaneness, but they would not consider it a marriage in the sight either of God or of man, or as partaking in any way of the nature of a marriage. Say even, as in the eye of the law you may say if you please, that marriage is nothing more than a civil contract, the result is the same. Most comedies finish with a wedding ; yet nobody supposes the two actors are really pledged to marry each other at the end of the play, notwithstanding their many public professions ; nobody would really think them man and wife, even though they went through the form of being contracted in the presence of the registrar of their district, or any number of registrars, attentively regarding them from pit, boxes, and gallery. No one would say it was a marriage *all but* the signing of the names in the registrar's book, or any other formalities which the law may prescribe ; and for this simple reason, that, whether on a Pagan or a Protestant view of the matter, to constitute a marriage the parties concerned must really intend to do what they appear to do : without such intention it is but a farce.

Well, apply this to the case of Baptism. It is the doctrine of the Catholic Church that any body, even a lay person—man, woman, or child—may baptise when there is danger of death ; nay, that it is a true and valid Sacrament even though it be administered by a Jew, a heathen, or an infidel, so only that he intends to do what the Church does. I beg you to pay particular attention to this fact, because it shews the irrelevance of the common Protestant objection. I shall return to it hereafter ; but I mention it here because it makes the case I am about to put a *much more pertinent* one than you might otherwise imagine. Suppose you were to take one of those poor

Hindoos whom you sometimes see shivering at the corner of a street selling Protestant tracts, who knows nothing about the Christian religion, and has never heard of Christian baptism ; but suppose you were to take and teach him the way of baptising, bidding him do as he sees you do, but without telling him that the act had a religious meaning, or any meaning at all ; and suppose, by way of amusement or to keep himself in practice, he were to go through the form over a child or any unbaptised person, say one of his own race, such child or such person (according to the Catholic doctrine) would not really be baptised, because the Hindoo had no intention of baptising. He did not know what the Church does, and had no intention of doing what the Church does ; all he intended was to do what *you* had taught him to do.

This is but common sense, or (if you prefer the term) sound philosophy. Baptising, if, like any other action, it is to be a *human* action, that is to say, the action of a *man* or of a rational moral agent, must be done with an intention of doing it. It is pouring water and saying words ; but it is not baptising, unless the intention of baptising do in some way or other go along with the action. What but intention can distinguish acts externally alike ? A devout mother, while in the act of washing her child, might repeat the form of baptism, meaning thereby merely to invoke the blessing of the Holy Trinity upon her offspring ; a Protestant would say—at least, on his own principles he ought to say—that child was baptised ; but a Catholic would say there was no baptism, simply because no baptism was intended. This is so in all human affairs ; it is the intention which constitutes an act what it is. The same action, externally or materially, is quite a different thing when done with one intention to what it is when done with another. If I shoot at a pigeon and kill a crow, people will consider me only a very bad shot ; but if I shoot at you and kill a pigeon, they will rightly judge me guilty of murder, because my intention was to kill you ; whereas, *on the other hand*, if I aim at the pigeon and kill you instead, nobody will lay your blood at my door, though *materially* the act is the same as if I intended to murder

you : it is the intention that makes all the difference. What a man intends to do, he does ; what he does not intend to do, he does not do : he does not do it formally, or so as to make it his own act, unless he intend to do it. If you put your name to a piece of paper, and it turns out to be what you never thought of its being, a bond for 1000*l.*, no one would consider the document your own act and deed ; you intended to do one thing, and by fraud or by error you did another, for which you are not responsible, and which, in right and in truth, is not your act at all.

Such is the doctrine of intention in its simplest form ; and thus far every body, I should suppose, must see the reasonableness of it. If God wishes the sacraments of His Church to be administered by men, He wishes that those who administer them should intend to do so. If Christ has His ministers on earth, and those ministers are men, not brute creatures nor automaton figures, but rational beings, they must act as such when they perform ministerial acts : their acts must be human acts. But they would not be human acts, they would not be done as by rational beings, unless they were done with an intention. This is clear. Once, therefore, allow that Christ has His ministers on earth, and you, in fact, allow that these ministers must act with an intention. To deny the necessity of intention is all one with denying the existence of ministers and sacraments. This is so clear, that I am sure no Protestant would make any difficulty about the matter, if Catholics would only admit that Sacraments were *merely* human acts and nothing more ; and if Catholic priests and bishops would only allow themselves to be "accounted" not "the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1), but mere mechanical agents, destitute of all real authority and power in things divine. It is because they claim to be sent by Christ, as His Father had sent Him (John xx. 21 ; compare Luke x. 16) ; claim to rule the flock which He has purchased (Acts xx. 28 ; Heb. xiii. 17) ; to act for Him and in His name ; to stand to us in His stead (2 Cor. v. 20) ; to be, though "earthen vessels," the depositories of His "treasure" (iv. 7) ; it is because the

profess to regenerate by baptism; to bestow the Holy Ghost; to bless and forgive sins in the person of Christ (John xx. 23; 2 Cor. ii. 10); to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ; in short, it is because they declare that these acts of theirs have supernatural effects, that Protestants do not like to think they are *their* acts at all. This is why they cannot receive the doctrine of intention: it makes the Catholic priest really Christ's minister, and his acts real spiritual acts.

Before I go further, I wish you to observe that this is the true ground of the Protestant objection. Protestants profess to object to the doctrine of intention; but what they really assail is that of the priesthood and the Sacraments. I beg you then thoroughly to understand that I am defending, not the latter doctrine, but the former. I am not proving to you that priests are what we say they are, or that they have the powers we say they have, but that, as priests are *men*, their acts, to be their acts, must be done with an intention. What powers they may possess, or what effects their acts may produce, is another and a distinct question.

However, as the two questions are practically mixed up together in people's minds, and the necessity of intention for the validity of any ministerial act is made an argument against the Catholic doctrine of the priesthood and the Sacraments, I am willing to take the Protestant objection as it commonly stands.

Protestants hate priests; and though they affect to despise, are afraid of them. They cannot get rid of the notion that they are all knaves or the tools of some malevolent power. They think, therefore, that if the Sacraments are any of them necessary to salvation, and if the intention of the minister is necessary to the Sacrament, then, indeed, people have a poor chance of being saved. At the best, a man's intention is so uncertain, and Catholics are so unable to say how much intention is necessary, and the priests are so crafty and so wicked,—many of them believe nothing at all; indeed it is quite certain that one in every twelve is a downright infidel—that it is plain the whole system is one of fraud and delusion. Poor Papists

bad priests! bad bishops! and, worst of all, that old sinner the Pope, who thinks to do what he likes with people's souls!

One word at starting. Many Protestants—and you, kind reader, may be among the number—believe that two Sacraments at least were “ordained by Christ Himself,” and are “generally necessary to salvation.” Now I have just as much right to say that your ministers are crafty and wicked, as you have that ours are; mind, I do not say they are crafty and wicked, because I have no wish to sin against charity; but suppose I were to choose to say so, and suppose I were to go on to declare that you and your children were completely at their mercy, for that they might secretly substitute some other liquid for water in the Sacrament of Baptism, and for wine in that of the Lord's Supper, or that they might slur over or omit the name of one of the Three Persons in the Blessed Trinity, or otherwise alter the form of administration, what have you to answer? If you keep to Christ's institution, you must allow that such defects invalidate the Sacrament. Whatever grace or blessing you consider annexed to it, and even if you believe that none is annexed, you must any way admit that Christ's intention is not fulfilled, and the ordinance not administered as He willed and enjoined it to be. You will observe, too, that the result is the same, whether it proceed from wilful neglect or from simple carelessness and unintentional error. The answer you may make to this may perhaps be my answer also; but at any rate you must feel there is a corresponding difficulty in the matter. I shall have a word to say to the “Bible-only Christian” after a while.

But to come to what the Church herself has declared; for Protestants have very wild notions on the subject, and fancy that a great deal more is meant by “intention” than is meant. All that she positively requires is, that the person who administers a Sacrament should “intend to do what the Church does;” and by these words is not meant that the person should intend immediately to do what the Catholic Church, or, as Protestants would say, the Roman Church does; on the contrary, if he intend *immediately to do what some Protestant sect does*, the Sacrament is

valid, if only as a matter of fact that sect does what the Catholic Church does. This being so, it is plain that it is not necessary to intend to confer any grace, or produce any spiritual effect, by means of a Sacrament, or even to know the nature of the rite; it is sufficient to intend to do that particular act which the Church does. Neither faith nor knowledge are required; nay, a man may actively disbelieve and deride the doctrine of the Church, and openly protest against and abjure any sacramental efficacy in the act that he does, and even deny that it has any sacredness in it, and yet he will perform a valid Sacrament if only he intend to do that religious act which the Church does. Hence we see the irrelevance of all objections grounded on the fact that there have been at times priests in the Church who were secretly infidels; their infidelity could not invalidate their priestly acts, if only they intended to do what the Church does. And, by the way, I may observe, that an infidel is a most unlikely person to withhold his intention: he does not believe that Sacraments are any thing *with* intention; why, then, should he withhold it? Anyhow, personal belief or non-belief has nothing to do with the matter. It is what the Church *does*, not what she *intends*, that must be intended by the minister of a Sacrament. So the Hindoo I spoke of a page or two back would really baptise if, instead of intending to do only, as I supposed, what you had taught him to do, he were to intend to do that *religious* act which he knew was done by Christians. Such baptism would be valid, and need not be repeated, even though he were ignorant for what end it was done. Nay, further, there is a sense in which the act might be performed by way of amusement, and yet be valid; as in the famous case of the great St. Athanasius when a boy, who is said to have played at baptising one of his companions, meaning, in his childish sport, really to do what he had seen done by the Church. We know nothing, indeed, of the particulars of the case, and I do not pretend to vouch for the truth of the story; but granting the fact *to be as I have stated it*, Catholic theologians would hold *the act to be sacramentally valid*.

However, Protestants may say, that whatever be in-

tended, there must be an intention, or the Sacrament is no sacrament, and Catholics cannot tell you how much intention is enough. Now this I positively deny. Catholics can tell you all that it is necessary for you to know on the subject, though not perhaps in the way which Protestants call upon them to do. Protestants, who have no dogmas and no theology, are always saying to us, "Shew us your faith; let us look at it; let us see all you believe, or may believe, set down clearly in black and white." They have no other notion of faith or religion except as written and printed in a book such as a man may put in his pocket and read (if read he can) whenever he likes.

They have no idea of a present, living, teaching Church, or of a faith so deeply realised and so universally diffused as to need no formal definition. I say, then, that we *do* know how much intention is enough, in the same way that we know every thing else about our religion which it is necessary for us to know. The doctrine of the Church is to be found in the decrees of Popes, and in decrees of Councils ratified by Popes; of course, it is in Scripture too, at least implicitly, but it is formally stated where I have said. And if you ask me where it was before it was thus formally stated, I answer, that it was written invisibly by the Holy Ghost in the fleshly tables of the hearts of the faithful. The present actual teaching of the Church and the present actual belief of the people,—from these may be conclusively gathered what is the Catholic doctrine on all such points as have not been positively ruled by authority. If the tide runs strongly in one direction, you may feel morally certain what the Church would authoritatively decide on any given subject. It is absurd to say you cannot know the doctrine of the Church on some particular point because she has issued no formal decree. You may know her *mind* from her popular teaching, and from the writings of her great men and doctors.

Well, so is it with the doctrine of intention. The Council of Trent framed a decree about it, and subsequent Popes have issued formal decisions upon it; and if you are not *satisfied with these*, and want to know something more *explicit*, you may go to Catholic theologians, and ask for

further knowledge at their lips, or consult their writings. I do not say it is an easy subject, nor can I see how you can expect it to be so. When we get philosophising about wills and intentions, we are considering the acts, not of the body, but of the mind ; we are discussing abstract questions of metaphysics, and are obliged to think closely and use hard words. Still, as these hard words express simple ideas, I will try and make this piece of theology plain to you in the best way that I can.

Divines divide intention into three kinds ; viz. actual, virtual, and habitual. Of these, actual intention is more than is required, and habitual intention is less than is required. All agree that virtual intention is enough.

First, then, of *actual* intention. Suppose two people to be quarrelling, and that each tries to say to the other the most cutting things he can think of ; such an intention might last for an hour or more unbroken. Every time each spoke he would fully mean, heart and soul, to wound the other's feelings, and direct each separate act to that end. The intention would be as keen at the middle or the termination of the quarrel as at the beginning. This, then, may be taken to illustrate an actual intention, an intention which belongs as much to one part of the proceeding as to another ; which actively determines every word and look and gesture ; which never tires or slackens, but keeps burning on all the time, and is as much the soul of each separate act as it is of the whole business. Now this amount of intention the Church does not consider necessary. She does not require moral impossibilities ; she knows that her ministers are men, not angels, and that even the most devout are liable to distraction and wandering thoughts, and therefore she does not require a constant active intention all the while they are performing a function or administering a Sacrament. She desires, indeed, from them the largest possible amount of reverent attention, and takes great pains, by means of her various ceremonies, to secure it ; but it is not *necessary* for the validity of the Sacraments.

And now of *habitual* intention. Suppose I intended to go to church, or to say my prayers at home to-day, and suppose I performed what I intended to do, it is plain I should be

doing what is commonly meant by going to church and saying prayers. But suppose I went to church, or knelt down and went through a form of prayers, never having intended so to do, but from sheer absence of mind, and merely because I had done the like yesterday; every body would see that such acts were not really what they looked to be. I should be acting to all intents and purposes like a man in a dream: my actions would not be the effect of any present or previous will on my part. And so, if you can fancy a person baptising, or rather seeming to baptise, in such a state of stupor and unconsciousness, or from the force of a habit so merely mechanical, that if he were asked what he was doing he would not be able to say; such act on his part would not be a ministerial or a sacramental act, any more than if it were done by machinery or by a "learned pig:" it would not be a *human* act; it would not be connected with any present or previous act of his will. Even if he intended to baptise before he fell into this state, still he would not do a sacramental act *while he was in it*: his intention would not flow on into what he did; it would be altogether checked and stayed; it would have no continuous existence and no continuous action; it would not live and move between whiles.

Virtual intention is different from either of these. It leads to a continued series of acts. Thus, a man goes out in the morning to work with the intention of supporting his family. He talks to his companions, hums a tune, listens to a story, while his hands mechanically continue his work; still his first intention remains in force, and really animates every act of labour he performs. Such is virtual intention; an intention which, once formed, does not die out, but continues and takes effect in spite of distractions and forgetfulnesses, and completes the action it set out to do. In like manner a bishop may put on his vestments and go into church with the intention of ordaining candidates for orders, but through human infirmity or culpable inattention, may have a thousand distractions while performing the function. Still his original intention is enough, *in spite of all his wanderings of mind, and the orders so conferred are indisputably valid.*

What I have said, then, comes to this; that all hum

acts imply intention of some kind; that the Sacraments, though in effect divine acts, as being done ministerially for Christ and in His Name, are not the less human acts as being done by human beings, and therefore they require intention on the part of the minister; and lastly, that the kind of intention which is enough for the purpose is a virtual intention to do that act which the Church does. Now seriously it strikes me—and by this time I think you must be of a like persuasion—that so far from its being a hard thing to have intention enough, *it is very hard not to have all that is required*. I really believe a man might try to withhold his intention from the act, and not succeed. It is plain, too, that if he were to succeed in withholding it, he would be guilty of a mere gratuitous piece of wickedness, for which he could have no conceivable inducement except the gratification of a diabolical malice. It may be well, then, to recollect, that they who minister Sacraments are men, not devils.

However, it may be said that, after all, it *is* possible to withhold one's intention, and as there *may be* absence of sufficient intention from some unknown cause, so no one can be certain that what appears to be a sacrament is a Sacrament. This is the most popular objection, and it is often put in the following startling form: If the doctrine of intention be true, no one can be sure that the priest who says Mass or hears confessions is really a priest at all; for all you know, the bishop who seemed to ordain him had no intention of ordaining him, or was incapable of ordaining, having never been validly baptised; nay, the Pope himself may be nothing but a layman, or not even a Christian.

Let me first put a question to the Protestant objector: Here is a poor uneducated man who does not even know his letters; you take up a book and propose to read to him a chapter in the Bible. Bible? how does he know that it is a Bible? he has only your word for it, and you may deceive him; it may look very like one, but how can he *be sure* that it is the genuine book? and if it is, how does *he know* that you will read what is in it? what degree of *certainty* has he that you will not invent something out of *your own head*, or artfully mix up truth with falsehood? *You are but a man*, and for all he knows you may be a very

bad and cruel man, however good and kind you may look. But grant that it is the Bible, is it so easy a book to him that he will require no explanation of it? It is the sense, not the letter, which is the Word of God; will you not expound it to him if he ask you? But if you expound, what degree of certainty has he that your exposition is right? In short, how can he be sure that he has heard the Word of God even in the letter, to say nothing of the sense? My good sir, your objection is really directed against the use of all human agencies and means in the matter of religion; and if it be an argument *for* any thing is an argument for Deism and even Atheism. It is certain, as you say, that men *may* deceive or err in administering Sacraments, and it is equally certain that they may deceive or err in expounding or reading what you consider the only Word of God. I am not saying that the chances of detection are equal, nor do I mean to represent the two cases as exactly parallel; all I wish you to see is, that there is a sense in which even you must allow that the "Bible-only Christian" is in the power of man. He may be sure that the Bible is the Word of God, but he cannot be sure with the same kind of certainty that a particular book is the Bible, or that what is read to him, as from the Bible, is part of God's Word. He may be sure there is a Gospel to be preached, but he cannot be as sure that the Gospel is preached to *him*.

But I may carry the argument further, on your own principles. The Bible was composed in a learned language; how, then, is the poor man to be sure that it has been rightly translated? Books used to be written by hand; how, then, is he to be sure that it has been correctly transcribed? There were no printing-presses in old times; the Bible could not be stereotyped as now-a-days; how, then, is he to be sure that what you call the Bible is the original book, even if one ever existed? Talk about a Catholic having no certainty whether a Sacrament is really a Sacrament, why, *on your principles*, you cannot be certain that the Bible is really the Bible; it has come to you through *men*, and men may deceive. You say the *Catholic Church is a satanic conspiracy against the truth of*

God, why may not a similar conspiracy have existed in old times against the Word of God? The Bible was then in the hands of the priests, and if priests are wicked enough to withhold their intention from Sacraments, they were wicked enough to make away with the Bible itself; at least they may have suppressed certain parts, corrupted particular texts, or perverted whole passages to serve their own purposes. Your objection is an infidel objection; it goes as much against the Bible as against the Church and the Sacraments. The Bible has ever been in the hands of men, and (so to say) in their power. It comes to you through human agents, and it is still ministered to you by human agents.

Now to these objections I defy any Protestant, on his own principles, to give a satisfactory answer. He must allow that, humanly speaking, the Word of God has ever depended for its existence and for its application on the ministry of man; and this is all for which it is my present object to contend. But if he really believes the Bible to be the Word of God, he will feel confident that, by some means or other, God has provided, and does provide, both for its preservation and for its effectual use among men. Well, what a good Protestant believes with respect to the Bible, the Catholic believes with respect, not only to the Bible, but to the Sacraments of the Church. He believes that God has instituted priests and Sacraments; and believing this, he believes also that God has provided, and does provide, for the preservation and due administration of His own institution. The Protestant objection *takes for granted* that Pope, bishops, priests, and Sacraments are no parts of Christ's institution for the salvation of men. It assumes that the Church is a human device; and its whole force lies in this assumption. For if, on the contrary, the Church be a divine institution, and the Pope Christ's Vicar, and bishops His representatives, and priests His ministers, and Sacraments His ordinances, it follows surely that He will not suffer His own work to fall to ruin, but will provide for its preservation in spite of all possible dangers from the errors or malice of men. Protestants seem determined to ignore the fact, that Catholics believe in grace

and in the Providence of God ; and so it is easy to make game of our doctrines. It is quite true that we believe that Sacraments are void without the minister's intention ; but it is true also that we believe that that intention is subject to the particular grace and Providence of God. We believe that the ministers of the Church are gifted with a special grace for the discharge of the office with which they are invested ; and that as "the hairs of our head are all numbered" under God's ordinary Providence, so not only the acts but the intentions of His ministers are overruled and ordered by that special Providence whose dominion extends even to the wills and innermost thoughts of men. Thus it never occurs to the pious Catholic to have a misgiving on the subject ; and when men without faith would try to thrust doubts into his mind, he says to himself, "God is as wise as He is good. It was not at random that He put the 'treasures' of His sacramental graces into 'earthen vessels,' and made the validity of His ordinances depend on the intention of His ministers. It is *His* intention which is the soul of their intention, and which sways them without interfering with their personal freedom. I believe it is true that intention, being an act of a man's own will, may be withheld, and the Sacrament consequently be void ; but I believe, nay, I am confident, that, as Sacraments are the ordinances of God, He will see to the fulfilment of His own gracious purposes."

This, then, is my answer to the Protestant objection. It is true that we cannot be certain *with the certainty of faith*,—that is, with the certainty with which we believe the being of God or the articles of the creed,—that this or that priest has been validly ordained, or this or that Sacrament has been validly administered ; but we *are* certain, with the certainty of faith, that priests and Sacraments are Christ's institution ; and moreover we may be *morally* certain that in any indefinite number of instances there was an intention to do what the Church does ; and these two certainties are enough for all practical purposes. The Protestant has nothing like the same kind or degree of certainty in *any thing* that he believes.

I may add, that though we cannot have the certainty of

faith, we may have, and ought to have, the certainty of *hope*, for hope rests on the general promises of God. We hope in God, that what He has promised in the general, He will fulfil to us in the particular; and this relieves us of all personal fears and anxieties.

Remember too, that no Catholic believes that the grace of God is tied down by some fated necessity never to give itself except through Sacraments. God may, if He pleases, act by extraordinary ways, as well as by ordinary ones, and give a soul grace which supersedes the necessity of Sacraments. Indeed, we know that the desire of baptism, when it cannot be had, and an act of true contrition for sin with the desire of confession to a priest, when confession is not possible, is deemed by the Church as sufficient to a dying person without the actual reception of either Sacrament.

You must not confound two things which are quite distinct. That Sacraments are the ordinary channels by which God gives His sanctifying graces is one thing; that God in His good pleasure may give those graces without Sacraments is another. What the Catholic Church teaches is, that there is no *Sacrament* without intention; she is not so foolish or so impious as to teach that there is no grace without Sacraments, much less does she say that another's intention is necessary for our salvation. On the contrary, she would have us be sure that God, who is love, will rather work a miracle than suffer a man of good will to be really a loser by an act of volition in another without fault of his own. It is true that priests are God's ministers, and that, as being His ministers, He acts by them in the work of salvation; but as to the monstrous doctrine which Protestants attribute to Catholics, that He has made over His power, and His goodness, and His providence, and His grace into the hands of the priests to do as they please with the souls of men, as though God Himself stood by a helpless spectator, unable to interfere in their behalf,—this *is simply* one of those numerous calumnies which malice *has invented*, and prejudice believes out of hatred for the *Catholic Church*.

Library of Christian Doctrine.

THE CHURCH THE DISPENSER OF SCRIPTURE;

OR,

ARE CATHOLICS ALLOWED TO READ THE BIBLE?



By Permission.

LONDON:
BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.
READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

The Church the Dispenser of Scripture:

OR,

ARE CATHOLICS ALLOWED TO READ THE BIBLE ?

WE are often asked, whether, after all, it is or is not true that the Catholic Church withholds the Scriptures from the people; and that, sometimes, by the more candid Protestants, who are unwilling to think as badly of us as others do, but yet who, like all the rest, take it as a matter of course that, if this be true, there is nothing to be said for us; the Catholic Church, in that case, standing at once self-convicted in their opinion, both of soul-destroying tyranny and of conscious imposture shrinking from detection.

There is scarcely a Protestant who would not judge thus; but is it a fair judgment? Supposing it to be proved that the Church has at any time withheld the Scriptures from the people, will this fact bear the weight of the heavy charges which have been grounded upon it? Does it, indeed, follow that she is guilty of soul-destroying tyranny? and if so, why? "Why?" answer our opponents, amazed at the question, "because holy Scripture is the one means appointed by Almighty God for conveying to man the knowledge of the Christian faith." Certainly, if this be so, the conclusion follows as a matter of course; we are all agreed that the knowledge of the Christian faith is necessary to salvation, and that, consequently, to withhold the only means of attaining such knowledge is to withhold the only means of salvation; which no one can designate otherwise than *an act of soul-destroying tyranny*, and that of a character *simply diabolical*. But is the proposition thus taken for *granted*, that holy Scripture is the one appointed means, *really self-evident*, or is it admitted by both parties as

common ground? So far from it, it is one which we not only do not admit, but which we distinctly and strenuously deny; nay, it is the very point on which the whole controversy between us hinges. We believe that it was the purpose of Almighty God that we should learn our faith, not from a book, but from a living teacher, that teacher being His Church. It is not, therefore, fair to speak as though the rulers of the Church, in withholding Scripture (if they do so withhold it), were withholding that which is admitted on all hands to be the one appointed means of learning the truth of God, and so were consciously guilty of "soul-destroying tyranny." I do not mean for a moment to assert that holding false principles is to be pleaded in justification of bad conduct; I only mean, that our principles ought in fairness to be proved false, not simply ignored, and those of our opponents proved true, not summarily taken for granted.

So also, to say that withholding Scripture argues conscious imposture is to take for granted the infallibility of private judgment, which Catholics emphatically deny. If individual interpretations are necessarily correct, then to refuse to be tested by them is certainly a mark of conscious imposture; but surely not so, if they are liable to err. To shrink from having a piece of work measured by an uneven rule is no admission that the work itself is crooked, any more than declining to be judged by an incompetent tribunal is an acknowledgment of guilt.

Whether, then, it be true or not that the Church withholds the Scriptures from her children, we protest against these charges, because they are grounded on principles which we deny, and which, nevertheless, our adversaries take for granted instead of proving. Prove the principles, and then we will stand the consequences. As to the point itself, all that our space will allow us to attempt is, to make a brief and straightforward statement, first of the principles of the Church concerning it, and next of what her conduct has actually been; to enter into a defence, or even a minute explanation of either, would far exceed our present limits.

The Church's principle, then, is this, that, as she is the sole infallible interpreter of holy Scripture, so she is also

its sole authorised dispenser, and that it is both her right and her bounden duty to give or to withhold it, as shall seem to her most conducive to the spiritual benefit of her children, of which she alone is the judge, being responsible for her judgment to none but to God only, from Whom she holds her office among men.

That this doctrine should be otherwise than startling and hateful to Protestants we cannot expect; and, as we have said, we have not now space to defend it. Thus much, however, is plain, that it is at least consistent with the rest of the Catholic system, which all reposes on one fundamental principle; namely, that the Church is the representative upon earth of our blessed Lord Himself, with authority and powers derived from Him, so that who obeys her obeys Him, and who despises her despises Him. And, in truth, all the various offices of the Church are so linked together, that the idea of one seems almost of necessity to involve that of the others. Thus, if she is the only infallible interpreter of Scripture, it almost follows as a necessary consequence, that she must also be its only authorised dispenser; for if a right faith is necessary to salvation, and if the Church alone has a certain knowledge of what that faith is, and of the real meaning of the documents in which it is (for the most part) contained; while individuals attempting to expound those documents for themselves are certain to fail—such failure, be it observed, perilling that eternal salvation which it is the mission of the Church to secure to them—it seems but reasonable that she should have further authority to withhold those same documents from such as are perverting them to a use contrary to that for which Almighty God committed them to her charge. And, after all, holy Scripture is but one gift among many; and, according to the Catholic system, the Church is the sole depositary and dispenser of all God's supernatural gifts, inasmuch as she holds and dispenses the Sacraments, which are the main channels through which those gifts are conveyed.

If, then, her children trust her freely and confidently in breaking to them the Bread of Life, it is surely but consistent and reasonable that they should trust her also as the dispenser to them of the pure "milk of the word."

Now this idea of dispenser involves in itself a twofold power; the power to bestow, and the power to withhold. That the Church has pre-eminently exercised the first of these, the power of bestowing, with respect to holy Scripture, is a fact which, however ignored by such as will maintain a theory perforce and in the teeth of counter-evidence, no one who has ever fairly looked into the subject attempts to dispute.

How was it, for instance, that the Bible first found its way into the languages of Western Europe? If it had been the will of the Church to shut up the books of Scripture from the people, she had nothing to do but to leave them in the tongues in which they were originally written,—Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek,—all alike unknown in the West, except to the learned few. But, instead of that, we find that from the times of the Apostles, translations were made, first of one book of Scripture, then of another, into Latin; so that, in the very earliest ages, there was at least one version, if not more, of the entire Bible in that language; which, be it remembered, was not then what it is now, merely the language of the learned and of the Church, but the spoken tongue of the whole Western world. To this, however, it may be answered, that no one doubts but that the Church in Apostolic times was willing to disseminate the Scriptures, for it had not yet become corrupt, and so had no reason to shrink from being tested by them. Well, then, let us go on to a later period in her history. Who has not heard of the Vulgate? Who does not know that it is a Latin translation of the entire Bible, stamped with the approbation of the Church in a manner so patent and so universally recognised, that the very name of the Vulgate is absolutely identified in the mind of the people of this country with the idea of Popery? Now what is the history of the Vulgate? Was it made with the intention of locking up the Scriptures in a dead language? Consult any book of Church history, and you will find that it was brought into its present form in the fifth century, before the downfall of the Roman empire, and while Latin was still the spoken language of the West; that it was undertaken by order of the Pope, in consequence of complaints of its

curacy in the existing version; and that the person to whom the execution of this great and laborious work (one, partly of revision and partly of fresh translation,) was entrusted was St. Jerome, (one of the clergy of Rome,) a man profoundly versed in the Eastern languages, and distinguished for the classical elegance with which he wrote Latin, his native tongue; a man also of the most exalted sanctity and devotion. The whole history of this great undertaking is most interesting; but we have not space here to recount any of its details; and, indeed, sufficient to our present purpose is the fact, that the Vulgate was edited in the fifth century, under the auspices of the highest authority of the Church; and that its language (Latin) was at that time the spoken tongue of the whole Western empire. And if we go on to a period still later, we shall find the Church still labouring to increase among her children the knowledge of the written word. After the mighty power of Rome had bowed and fallen before the sweep of the Northern barbarians, her language too, in a short time, ceased to be the vernacular tongue of any nation, and became what is called a dead language—(though, in truth, it has ever lived in the sacred offices of the Church, and for ages was the medium of communication between the learned of all lands, as indeed, in some measure, it is still); while, from its gradual blending with the dialects of the conquering tribes, grew up new tongues, which, developing as time advanced, resulted at last in the copious and polished languages of modern Europe. These last were necessarily for some time rude and barbarous in their structure, too much so for written composition in them to be possible; but when once they became moulded into any thing like form, we find, in almost every instance, that the very first use made of them was for the translation of holy Scripture. “In the eighth and ninth centuries,” says a Protestant historian,* “when the Vulgate had ceased to be generally intelligible, . . . translations were freely made into the vernacular languages.” In our country, the Venerable Bede, a canonised Saint of the eighth century, translated various parts of Scripture into Anglo-Saxon, the language then spoken here; and

* Hallam, *Middle Ages*, iii. 474.

before his time, as he himself tells us, the poet Cædmon, having received the gift of song miraculously in a vision, devoted himself during the remainder of his life to making poetical paraphrases of Scripture in his native tongue. Later than this, in the reign of Alfred, a translation was made of the whole New Testament; and he himself, it is said, at the time of his death, was engaged in translating the Psalms. In the tenth century, a complete translation was made of the Old Testament. In the eleventh century, as we know, this country was conquered by the Normans, which caused a complete revolution in the language; the old Anglo-Saxon being forcibly crushed down, and superseded among the higher classes of society by the Norman; but yet retaining sufficient life to become the basis of our present language, which resulted from its gradual amalgamation with the Norman. While the idiom of the country was in this unsettled state, it could not be expected that there should be much writing in it of any kind; yet we find that even the first centuries after the conquest produced translations of many books of Scripture, but chiefly in verse, in which, indeed, the first efforts of an infant language are almost always made. Soon, however, there were translations in prose also; and there are still existing copies of an English translation of the entire Bible, supposed to have been executed in the 13th century; these were made chiefly by clergy, and always with the encouragement of Church authorities.

We have mentioned what took place in our own country, because more immediately interesting to ourselves; but the same work was going on elsewhere with at least equal energy. In Germany and in France, in these same centuries, were various translations made both in prose and verse, of many of which there are manuscript copies still existing, whose date and history are well known. That such copies were multiplied by the incessant labour of the monks, many of whom passed their lives in this toilsome occupation, it is scarcely necessary here to mention; but it must be so generally known that, when the necessity of manual labour was superseded by the invention of printing, the very first use which was made, at least on a large

of that most invaluable of all discoveries, was for the publication of various editions of the Bible. Those first published were, as might be expected, in the sacred language; but as early as 1466, a German Bible was printed, two copies of which are still preserved in the Senatorial Library at Leipsic.

That at the present day there is an abundant supply of Catholic Bibles in the vernacular languages is admitted on all hands, and that, too, under the unhesitating sanction of the highest authorities of the Church. Any Protestant who will take the trouble to open an English Catholic Bible will find, as a sort of preface to it, a copy of a letter from Pope Pius VI. to the Most Rev. Antonio Martini, Archbishop of Florence, on the occasion of his having published a translation of the holy Bible into Italian, in which he expresses the highest approbation of his work, saying that, "at a time when a vast number of bad books, which grossly attack the Catholic religion, are circulated even among the unlearned, to the great destruction of souls, it was rightly judged that the faithful should be excited to the reading of the holy Scriptures; for these are the most abundant sources, which ought to be left open to every one, to draw from them purity of morals and of doctrine, to eradicate the errors which are so widely disseminated in these corrupt times." As to the English Catholic Bible itself, the Douay version, as it is called, it is so well known to be used by the faithful in this country with the full sanction of ecclesiastical authority, that, like the Vulgate, of which it is a translation, it is absolutely identified in the minds of Protestants with Popery itself. However, as most of the versions now in use were made since the Reformation, we, of course, get no credit for them, as we are supposed to have been shamed into making them by Protestant example; and whether or not any versions existed in these same languages before that epoch, few take the trouble to inquire. Those who have done so, however, inform us that (not to speak of other countries) in Italy itself, the very centre of Catholicism and the dwelling-place of the Pope, no fewer than eight editions of the Bible in the vernacular tongue were printed before the year 1500.

Thus plentifully, from age to age, has the Catholic Church disseminated these treasures of divine wisdom committed to their charge. Her office of dispenser of holy Scripture, however, involves in it, as we have said, the power of withholding, as well as that of bestowing. A mother, when she distributes food among her children, regulates its quantity, and the time and manner of their receiving it, according to what she knows of the individual needs of each; and she as often shews her maternal care and affection in restraining, as in satisfying, their appetites; nay, sometimes, as in cases of sickness, she may deem it necessary for a while to keep from them certain kinds of food altogether. So it is with our Mother the Church. We are all infants in spiritual things, often very weak and sickly ones; and we have to look to her, not only to give us our meat in due season, but also to withhold it at such times as she shall judge it to be injurious to us; and surely her thus withholding it ought not to be construed into any disparagement on her part of the food itself. It is thus that she deals with the Sacraments: she does not bestow them in the same measure on all; some of them indeed, as Orders and Matrimony, she reserves exclusively for persons entering on certain states of life; and of those which are intended for the benefit of all Christians, even the very chief, the Body and Blood of our blessed Lord, which is the spiritual food without which we have no life in us, she does not allow all to approach with the same frequency; nay, from such as are, in her judgment, in an unfit state to receive it (so long as they continue in that state) she withholds it altogether. Yet none, even among her enemies, have therefore charged her with disparaging the Sacraments. And it is manifest that the more sacred the treasure committed to her charge, the more exact ought to be her stewardship of it, and the more sedulously ought she to guard it from profanation, and from being in any way perverted from the purpose for which Almighty God designed it. Now, with respect to holy Scripture, for individuals to attempt to gather the articles of their faith from it for themselves, is, in her judgment, thus to pervert it *it is one of her fundamental principles—a principle, indeed*

involved in the very fact of her own existence—that it was not the purpose of Almighty God that this should be, and consequently that it has not pleased Him to cast Scripture into such a form that it can thus be used with success, nor to gift individual men with any faculties, natural or supernatural, which can enable them thus to use it. To attempt to do so is therefore, in her judgment, practically to assert that to be the purpose of God which is not His purpose, and that to be possible which He has made impossible ;—that is, to act a lie ; and one, moreover, which brings ruin to the souls of those who are seduced by it. Now judging thus, can she, in reason and charity, do otherwise than endeavour to check this spirit of falsehood, even at the cost of withholding the sacred text from those who are thus mis-using it, or in danger of so doing ? If a madman, instead of using his knife to cut his food, should persist in attempting to cut with it his own throat or that of his neighbours, who would stand on much ceremony as to snatching it out of his hand ?

And if we look to the facts of the Church's conduct in this matter, we shall find that any formal restrictions which she ever laid on the reading of Scripture by individuals—and such have been few in number—have been caused by distinct abuses of this kind ; by individuals having promulgated their own interpretations of certain passages of Scripture, and heresies and schisms, as must needs be, having arisen in consequence. There never has been a heresy from the beginning, however wild and monstrous, which its maintainers did not profess to find in holy Scripture. And who shall gainsay them on any but the Catholic principle of an infallible interpreter ? For if there be none such, why has not one man a right to interpret Scripture for himself as well as another ? At any rate, so it is ; all those old heresies, some of which are now entirely dead and forgotten, and most of which would be repudiated (in name *at least*) by the majority of Protestants in this country, *were all in their day maintained as scriptural with as much confidence as the various Protestant opinions are now ; so that an ancient Father says, that "in Scripture itself the devil lays a snare for the faithful, to make them heretics ;"*

and another, that "heretics take the Gospel of Christ and make it the Gospel of the devil by their perversions."

The first instance, however (at least the first of which any distinct record seems to be preserved), of any thing like a formal prohibition on the part of the Church of the indiscriminate reading of Scripture in the vulgar tongue was one made by a local synod and for a temporary purpose. In a council of Bishops, held under the authority of a papal legate, in the city of Toulouse, in the year 1229, it was decreed that the use of translations into the vulgar tongue of the books of the Old and New Testaments should not be allowed to laymen. If we look into the history of the time when this prohibition was issued, we shall see that heresies of the most fearful kind were rife in various parts of Europe, especially in the south of France; and that these, like former heresies, had spread themselves, in the first instance, by means of private interpretations of Scripture. About thirty years before this council was held, we find by a letter from the Bishop of Metz to Pope Innocent III., that in his diocese there were held secret meetings for the purpose of reading the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, and expounding them; and the persons frequenting these meetings, the Bishop adds, "despised their lawful pastors, and laughed at their sermons." In answer to this letter, the Pope said that the desire to read and understand holy Scripture was "commendable rather than blame-worthy;" but that the despising the lawful pastors, even though they might be unlearned, and the frequenting secret assemblies, in which unauthorised persons might preach, was, of course, to be blamed. He also desired the Bishop to examine the version of holy Scripture which they used, and to inquire who was its author, and whether he was sound in the faith. It soon appeared, however, that these persons had no respect for ecclesiastical authority of any kind; they continued their secret meetings and private expoundings of Scripture; and the same spirit spreading, as is generally the case, in many different places at once, broke out at last into an open heresy, or rather into many heresies, which raged more especially in the south of France. Protestants in general, at the present day, make commo

cause, as a matter of course, with these heretics of the thirteenth century, simply on account of their hostility to the Church, and rejection of many of its doctrines, which Protestants also reject; but those among them who have really taken the trouble to look into the subject have discovered that they have little reason to be proud of these their brethren, and have been eager to disown them. "Some of them denied the reality of Christ's Body; others His being the Son of God; many the resurrection of the body; and some even a future state."* But the most formidable among them, both from their numbers and their organisation, were the Albigenses. These sprung from the remains of a sect as ancient as the third century after our Lord's birth, called the Manichæans, whose doctrines contained fragments of Christianity, mixed up with wild dreams from some of the Eastern mythologies. This sect, which had never entirely died out, had re-appeared in the seventh century under the name of Paulicians; and again in the eleventh had spread from the Eastern countries of Europe, where it had been lurking, to the Western, and had taken possession more especially of the south of France, where, from the town of Albi, they received the name of Albigenses. They held the existence of two Gods, a good and a bad one; the former, the author of the New Testament and creator of all invisible things; the latter, the author of the Old Testament, and creator of man's body and of all visible things. They rejected marriage, and at the same time practised, it is said, the most scandalous immoralities. They said that the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament were all damned; that St. John the Baptist was a demon; and that the resurrection of the body was a lie. "This opinion" (their leading doctrine of two principles), says the Protestant historian already quoted, "strange as we may think it, was supported by Scripture texts; so insufficient is a mere acquaintance with the sacred writings to secure unlearned and prejudiced minds from the wildest *perversions of their meaning.*" This judgment of a learned Protestant of the nineteenth century was that also of the ecclesiastical authorities in the thirteenth; and if we can

* Hallam, *Middle Ages*, iii. 466.

sider that the Church holds errors in faith to be fatal to the salvation of men's souls, we shall not wonder much at the decision of the Council of Toulouse, nor regard as other than a due exercise of maternal prudence on the part of the Church, the withholding for a time that which had been, as is allowed on all hands, so miserably perverted.

And if we go on to a later period, to the yet more serious troubles of the 16th century, we shall find that "the Bible, and the Bible only," was still the watchword of every kind of heresy. Not only Lutherans and Calvinists, but Anabaptists also, and Socinians, however utterly discordant their opinions from one another, all joined alike in this cry. And accordingly, at the Council of Trent, all the questions then current concerning holy Scripture, and its use and abuse, were entered into at full length.

In the fourth session of the council, after the canon of Scripture and the authority of apostolical traditions had been discussed and settled, the question of the abuses of Scripture came next under consideration; and these were classed under four heads. The first of these was the great variety of translations, which caused uncertainty as to the real tenour of the Word of God. To remedy this, it was judged that one only translation should be regarded as authorised (though the others were not condemned, their merit not being examined); and that called the Vulgate was the one selected and accepted, as being the most ancient; the most in use; as representing the ancient copies of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures more correctly than any other Latin version, or probably even than any then existing Greek or Hebrew edition; and, finally, as having been made before any of the modern disputes had arisen, and so as being necessarily unbiassed by them. The second abuse mentioned was the incorrectness of all the editions of the Bible; to remedy which it was advised that a new edition of the most exquisite correctness should be prepared under the eye of the Pope himself, of which a copy should be consigned to every cathedral church, which was afterwards done. The unbounded license of interpretation was next complained of, as the source of all the evils then raging; and it was proposed that none shou

be allowed to interpret them otherwise than according to the sense of the Church and the Fathers. This word "*otherwise*" was objected to, and that of "*contrariwise*" substituted, on the ground that it was not unlawful to suggest a new meaning for any passage of Scripture, where the Church had not already assigned to that passage any determinate interpretation. In the same spirit—surely the very opposite of narrow-mindedness—when one of the prelates present proposed that none but doctors or clerics should be allowed to interpret Scripture, the proposal was immediately and almost unanimously rejected, on the ground that "the blessed work of illustrating the Word of God was not to be restricted to any personal quality, as neither piety nor learning were so restricted; that the heavenly word is written to every Christian, and that meditation upon it is a study open to every Christian:" only it was determined that the result of their meditations should not be given to the world without having first been subjected to an ecclesiastical censorship; neither should they be published without the name of the author. The fourth and last abuse complained of was the readiness of printers to publish incorrect editions of Scripture, and unauthorised and anonymous interpretations.

After all these matters had been settled, the subject of translations of Scripture into the vulgar tongues was next considered, and discussed at great length, and with the earnestness which so important a question demanded. And after duly weighing, on the one hand, the evils which were likely to arise, and indeed had already arisen, from the indiscriminate reading of Scripture, and on the other, the benefits to be derived by devout and humble souls from the study of the words of Inspiration, the Council came to the conclusion, not of destroying or prohibiting such translations, but of putting the use of them by individuals under certain restrictions, subject to the discretion of ecclesiastical superiors.

Thus the Congregation of the Index,—a deputation from the Council, of eighteen Fathers, for the purpose of making a list of such books as are not allowed to the faithful without special permission,—in the fourth rule they drew up,

stated that as, on account of the rashness of men, evil had resulted from the indiscriminate use of Scripture in the vulgar tongues, it should be left to the judgment of the ecclesiastical superiors, after taking counsel with the parish priest or the confessor, to give permission for such reading to those who, as they knew, would "receive no detriment from the same, but rather an increase of faith and piety." These rules of the Index, it should be observed, are not enforced, or, as it is technically called published, in all countries (not, for instance, in our own), nor are they generally held to be binding on the conscience of individuals in countries where they are not so published. Still, however, as is clear, they are an indication at least of the mind of the Church; neither does this fourth rule at all contradict that letter of Pope Pius VI. which we have already quoted; for if any are to be permitted to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, there must needs be translations for them to read; and when the Pope exhorts that the faithful should be incited to read the Scriptures, he intends, of course, that they should be duly instructed and prepared for such reading; and this is virtually the condition which the rule in question requires.

In our own country, at the present day, certainly no general prohibition of the kind is supposed to exist: on the contrary, it is commonly considered as most desirable that even our poorer Catholics should be sufficiently well read in the Bible not to be easily perplexed by the "text-quoting" of their Protestant neighbours; and to that end Bibles and Testaments are published in the cheapest possible forms, and liberally distributed by priests among their flocks. On the other hand, the near contact of Protestantism ought to make us especially dread the contagion of the Protestant spirit; we ought therefore, even beyond all others, to be on our guard, lest the Word of Life should be to us the food of death.

We cannot take our leave of this subject without observing that there are other reasons, not connected with faith, which would make it questionable, one would think, even to Protestants, how far it is desirable to put some portions at least of the Old Testament into the hands of people

in general, and which, to Catholic parents, would be quite conclusive against allowing such to be read by young persons. As regards Protestants, it seems utterly inexplicable why, declaiming so violently as they do against the mere mention by name of particular sins in some of our popular examinations of conscience, and certain details to be found in our works on moral theology, written in a learned language and never intended for general use, they should yet be altogether without apprehension as to the possibility of mischief arising from the indiscriminate reading of every portion of the Bible.

We have thus briefly summed up all that the Church has done in the way of direct or formal restriction on the reading of Scripture, with the exception of local regulations, from time to time, under peculiar circumstances. But to gain an insight into her real principle and spirit in this matter, we must examine, not her formal decrees alone, but her practice from age to age. But as this would exceed our present space, we shall endeavour, on another occasion, to enter into the subject more deeply, in considering the Church as our instructor in holy Scripture. Enough, however, has been already said to shew how utterly Protestants misstate the question when they accuse the Catholic Church, in general terms, of withholding the Scriptures from the laity; whereas what she has really done has been simply to reserve to herself the authority to restrain from reading those Scriptures at particular times, and under particular circumstances, those who, as she knows, are entering on the study (or in danger of doing so) on a principle utterly false in itself and involving utterly ruinous consequences. To withhold altogether and to withhold at times are different things: the one is to deny, the other is but a necessary part of the economy of dispensing. When it is said that the faithful and wise servant is set over his Lord's household, to give them their meat *in due season*, does not this imply that the same meat should be withheld *out of season*?

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER PEOPLE.

I.

HOW ELIZABETH RESTORED THE PROTESTANT
RELIGION.



By Permission.

LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

How Elizabeth restored the Protestant Religion

It is the fashion to say that the Protestant Church founded on liberty of conscience. This is the favourite notion among all classes; yet nothing can be further from the truth, as a glance at history would shew. Henry persecuted, Edward VI. persecuted, Elizabeth persecuted, and of the Protestant Church as it now stands Elizabeth was the founder. Whatever accidental modifications it has undergone from the various political changes through which the crown and the nation have passed, as Elizabeth made it, such it has remained.

I say, then, that Elizabeth persecuted her Catholic subjects, and persecuted them to the death; and I will prove it by the plain facts of history. But I may be told, perhaps, by some, that proof is unnecessary; that the assertion is not denied; that many Protestant historians, especially of late years, have been forward in exposing and condemning the measures which Elizabeth adopted for the suppression of the Catholic religion and the establishment of the church. True, but it matters little what historians have done, if the people of this country are none the wiser for their labours; and this, speaking generally, is certainly the case. In the current literature of the day, in newspapers, in speeches, whether in Parliament or out, whenever the public is addressed, the old lies are repeated again and again. That penal laws were passed against Catholics, and that many of them were fined, imprisoned and even put to death, this, I grant you, is pretty generally known; but then it is said that the Catholics plotted to rebel, that the Pope excommunicated the queen, and that she released her subjects from their allegiance, and it is necessary therefore to put them down with a strong hand.

short, that it was the disloyalty of the Catholics, and not their religion, against which the laws were directed.

Now I will go through the first ten or eleven years of Elizabeth's reign—a sufficient period, surely, by which to test the truth of the popular account,—and I will shew, mostly from Protestant writers, that it is utterly false; and that during all this time the queen, the government, and the Protestant party were the aggressors, and the Catholics the sufferers; that it was their fidelity to their religion, and not their disloyalty to their sovereign, which was the occasion of the treatment they received.

Queen Mary had expired about noon on the 17th of November, 1558. A few hours afterwards the Commons were summoned to attend at the bar of the House of Lords, when the event was communicated to them by Heath, Archbishop of York and Lord High Chancellor. He announced at the same time that the Lady Elizabeth, her sister, was now queen, and that “of her most lawful right and title to the crown none could make question.” For this “good and loyal service” Elizabeth, says her Protestant biographer, “owed the archbishop a large debt of gratitude, for he thus made the first proclaiming of her title a solemn act of both Houses of Parliament.” “His conduct at this crisis,” she observes, “secured her the loyalty of the Catholics of England.” Not a voice was raised in opposition. On the 23d of the same month the queen made her entrance into London; and at Highgate, four miles from the city, was met by all the Catholic bishops, who knelt to do her homage.

And what, you may ask, was Elizabeth's religion at this time? Nay, what indeed! Protestant and Catholic writers are now pretty well agreed that she was indifferent to any. In the reign of her brother she had adopted Protestantism; in that of her sister she had conformed to the Catholic religion. Indeed, on several occasions she had found it expedient to protest her fidelity to the ancient faith; and when Mary, on her deathbed, conjured her to declare her real convictions, Elizabeth “prayed God the earth might open and swallow her up alive if she were not a true Roman Catholic

As such the nation at large still regarded her; though to many it was known, and by more suspected, that she leant to the opposite side. As a matter of fact, it would seem that personally Elizabeth was favourably inclined to many portions of the old religion, and that she would have been glad to set up a church after King Henry's pattern, in which doctrines should continue in the main unchanged, and the sovereign be acknowledged as supreme spiritual head in the place of the Pope. But her love of dominion was unbounded, and she was ready to consent to any change in religion which would help to seat her firmly on the throne. At present, however, be it remembered, she professed herself a Roman Catholic.

In a few days Elizabeth appointed her council, in which she retained thirteen of Mary's advisers, but added thereto eight of her own selection, who, if not avowed Protestants, were notorious favourers of the "reformed" religion. This mixture of Catholics and Protestants was to give a show of impartiality; but it was a mere deception. At the head of her council she placed Sir William Cecil (afterwards Lord Burleigh), a consummate politician, but a most unprincipled man, who having been a Protestant in Edward's reign, had not only conformed in that of Mary, but had tried to worm himself into her confidence by feigning extraordinary zeal for the Catholic faith. Mary never trusted him; and aware of the precariousness of her life, he had turned his devotion "from the setting to the rising sun." By his advice a *secret cabinet* was now formed, consisting of himself and four of his immediate friends, by which Elizabeth was able to mature her plans more at her leisure. To get rid of troublesome opponents, the Catholic leaders were to be brought into discredit with the nation, and their influence broken by fair means or foul. The plan was to institute vexatious inquiries into their conduct during the late reign, and to harass the bishops and clergy in particular by a series of legal prosecutions, or, if necessary, by new parliamentary enactments; to remove the present magistrates, and appoint *younger and needier men* in their place; to "purge" the *universities* and other public institutions of all who were *attached to the old religion*; in short, to establish complete *Protestant ascendancy* in church and state. All this was

to be done by degrees, and as opportunity offered. As for religion, they considered (to use the words of Collier, a Protestant writer,) that "it was by no means advisable to allow of more than one church; that the free exercise of different religions would prove an everlasting principle of sedition and disturbance." Those Protestants, therefore, who were disposed to carry the Reformation to uncomfortable extremes were to be kept in check; but "to prevent discontents," the national religion was to be made as large and loose as possible: a new Prayer-Book was to be fashioned out of that which was in use in King Edward's reign; and for this purpose a committee of the principal reformers, most of whom afterwards became Protestant "bishops," was secretly appointed.

Elizabeth's first act was to notify her accession to foreign powers. This she did by announcing that she had succeeded to the throne of England "by hereditary right and the consent of the nation." The instructions she gave her ambassadors varied with her interests; for in no one thing could she act sincerely and straightforwardly. The King of Denmark and the Lutheran princes of Germany were privately informed of her attachment to Protestantism, and of her anxious desire to form a political union among all its professors; while the Emperor Ferdinand and Philip king of Spain, both Catholic princes, were assured of her intention to maintain and strengthen the alliance that existed between the house of Austria and the English crown. Till very recently, it was generally believed that Elizabeth announced her accession, among the rest, to Paul IV., the then reigning Pontiff, and that his reply was of so insulting a nature as to drive her into the public profession of the Protestant religion. But documents* have come to light within the last few years which clearly prove not only that this pretended reply was never given by the Pope, but that no such announcement was ever made by Elizabeth. Thus a vast mass of crimination against Papal arrogance and presumption is at once tumbled to the ground; the whole being found to rest on a false foundation. So far from the Holy Father having refused to recognise Elizabeth's title to the crown of England,

* See vol. 4 of Dodd's *Church History*, edited by Tierney.

it now appears that he could not be induced by all the urgent solicitations of the French court to take any part against her; and that long after the supposed reply was said to have reached this country, the Pope and Cardinals were expecting a communication from the queen, and contemplating an embassy in return.

This discovery of course relieves me from the necessity of defending the conduct of the Pope; but as the words put into his mouth have reference to a fact which had an important political bearing in those days, it may be well to notice them. The affront which the Pope is pretended to have offered to Elizabeth consisted in his saying that he was unable to understand the "hereditary right" of one who was not born in lawful wedlock; an assertion which, however unpalatable to Elizabeth and her partisans, would have been perfectly true had it been uttered. Elizabeth was clearly illegitimate in the eye of the Church, having been born while Henry's lawful wife, Queen Catherine, was living; she had also been pronounced illegitimate by the law of the land; for, by a solemn instrument under the seal of Archbishop Cranmer, Henry himself had declared his marriage with Anne Boleyn, "for good and valid reasons," null and void. A sentence of divorce had accordingly been pronounced, approved by Convocation, and ratified by act of Parliament; in which act was included a special clause, declaring Elizabeth to be illegitimate. This act had never been repealed; for though, in regulating the succession to the crown, Henry VIII. had made Elizabeth capable of succeeding to her sister Mary, he left her still attainted in blood. But this was not all: there was another and a legitimate claimant to the throne, and that was Mary Queen of Scots, who had married Francis, dauphin of France, and whose son, James I., at the death of Elizabeth ascended the English throne by that very right of descent which he had from his mother. Again, as to the "consent of the nation:" even this was by no means so clear to those who lived in that day as it may be to us, who have the whole event before our eyes. The powers of Parliament were not then such as they have since become: a parliamentary title was not supposed to stand good against an heredi-

tary right. So that there would have been nothing so very surprising or censurable had the Pope made the reply which he is reported to have made. But even with this doubt upon her title, be it observed, the Catholics recognised Elizabeth as their queen; and this fact only serves to render her subsequent conduct towards them the more iniquitous, and to place their long submission to her tyranny in a more striking light.

Elizabeth required no rebuff on the part of the Pope to drive her into schism. It is plain, from the instructions she sent her ambassadors, from the choice she made in the appointment of her new counsellors, and from the sanction she gave to their underhand proceedings, that she was only watching the turn of events, and waiting to see how the people bore the first changes in religion, before she openly threw off her allegiance to the Holy See and the profession of Catholicism. Circumstances favoured her design. With the people, Elizabeth was for many reasons popular: she had been severely treated by Mary's government, and not without just grounds, as her admirers have themselves confessed; but the sympathy of the masses was naturally drawn to a princess in distress, and Elizabeth had availed herself of every opportunity to insinuate herself into their good graces by those displays of royal condescension in which she was so accomplished a proficient. The relative numbers of Catholics and Protestants at this time it is now impossible to ascertain; professedly, at least, the larger part of England was Catholic; Ireland* wholly so. On the other hand, the new opinions, it would appear, had made considerable way in London and its vicinity, as well as in the seaport towns; or rather it should be said, that great indifference about religion and laxity in practice there prevailed. Anyhow, it is plain that the faith of the nation must have suffered grievously from the continual changes that had been going on, backwards and forwards, for so long a time, the favour which had been shewn to heretical teachers, and the disadvantages under which the Catholics had laboured, not only from an openly hostile government like that of Henry and Edward, but from one that was pro-

* How Elizabeth treated Ireland will form a separate subject.

fessedly their friend,—the unprincipled, and as I have shewn you, anti-papal government of Mary. The wholesale executions in which that government had indulged, in spite of the remonstrances of the Pope's legate, and in opposition to the wishes of the Catholic bishops, had alienated people's minds from the old religion, and brought odium on the Church herself. Sympathy for the sufferers had turned with many into sympathy for the cause for which they suffered. Other reasons also operated in Elizabeth's favour. The claim of Mary Queen of Scots was unpopular in England; not because she was a Catholic, but because, being married to the eldest son of the French king, it was thought that if she ascended the English throne, England would become a mere province of France. Elizabeth hoped, and hoped rightly, that the fear of this event would make men less disposed to sift her pretensions or oppose her designs.

Still it was necessary for a while to proceed cautiously: the hopes of the Protestants were to be raised, without depressing too much those of the Catholics. She therefore played the hypocrite, this "good Queen Bess," as did her right trusty and well-beloved counsellors. Acting on the plan that had been concerted, the Queen continued to assist at Mass, and occasionally went to confession and received communion. She had the funeral of her sister Mary performed in her presence with all the solemnities of the Catholic ritual; and ordered Masses to be said for the soul of the Emperor Charles V., who was lately dead. Signs, however, were not wanting of the line which she was intending to pursue. The Bishop of Winchester was arrested as he descended the pulpit-stairs after preaching a sermon at Mary's funeral; in which, though he expressly acknowledged Elizabeth's right to the crown, he praised her sister for her Christian virtues, and spoke with all boldness against false teachers and the sin of schism. Other signs soon followed: the Protestant divines now returned from abroad, *shewed themselves* at court, and were appointed to places *of trust*. It began to be safe to lift the mask. The Bishop of Carlisle, while robing for Mass on Christmas morning, *received an order from the Queen not to elevate the most*

holy Sacrament in the royal presence. To this impious request the bishop made a very simple reply: "My life," said he, "is the queen's, but my conscience is my own;" on which Elizabeth withdrew with her train as soon as the Gospel was finished. The Bishop of London was subjected to a vexatious suit at law; and the Archbishop of York was obliged to resign his office of Lord Chancellor. But more than this: taking advantage of the tumults which were excited by the Protestants, the Queen forbade all preaching without a special license from the crown, and at the same time issued a proclamation requiring certain portions of the public service to be read in English; ordering that "all such rites and ceremonies should be observed in all parish churches of the kingdom as were then used and retained in her majesty's chapel, until consultation might be had in Parliament by the Queen and the three estates."

These arbitrary proceedings, and the threat which the last words held out of further interference with the worship of the Church, made it no longer possible to doubt Elizabeth's intentions. The bishops met and unanimously declared that they could not in conscience officiate at the coronation of a princess whose fidelity to the religion which she still professed they had so much reason to distrust. Elizabeth did not feel herself strong enough yet to carry things with a high hand, or to dispense with the public sanction of the Catholic hierarchy, and many expedients were tried to break their resolution. At length the Bishop of Carlisle was induced to place the crown upon her head; but not until the Queen, on her part, had promised to take the accustomed oath, solemnly engaging "to maintain the laws, honour, peace, and privileges of the Church as they existed in the time of King Edward the Confessor." She also received communion in one kind, and conformed to all the rites of the Catholic pontifical. The bishop, it is said, was haunted with remorse for the short remainder of his days; as well he might, considering the way in which the Queen observed the oath she had taken at his hands. The rest of the prelates stood firm in their refusal, and absented themselves from the ceremony. On the day before the coronation, when she was on her way to Westminster

many pretty pageants were enacted, in which Elizabeth played her part with great effect. Thus, while one of the boys of Christ's Hospital was delivering himself of a laudatory speech, "she sat," says her biographer, "with her eyes and hands cast up to heaven, to the great edification of all beholders." As she passed through Cheapside, an English Bible was let down to her by a child dressed to represent Truth. Her manner of receiving it, says Collier, was "particularly taking:" first she kissed her hands, and then she took and kissed the book, and laid it to her heart; and then she promised she would read it, as if it were the first opportunity she had had of doing so, and said it was the most precious of all the gifts she had received. "It must be said," he adds, "that she was a great mistress of behaviour, and perfectly understood the art of making herself popular without expense."

Ten days afterwards (Jan. 25th, 1559) Parliament met. The Queen assisted at a solemn Mass, which was followed (wonderful consistency!) by a sermon from a Protestant divine. The first thing done was to recognise Elizabeth's title to the crown. Mary had been careful to establish the legality of her mother's marriage and her own legitimacy; Elizabeth ventured on nothing of the kind: she left unreversed the act which declared the marriage of Henry with Anne Boleyn to be null and void from the beginning, and which fastened on her mother the stigma of incest, adultery, and treason; but she passed a law, which, though intended to make the right which she claimed by statute look like a right by royal descent, made it only the more apparent that any right which she had by statute, presupposed the nullity of her pretensions on the score of descent. However, what chiefly concerns us here is the alteration in religion. The Queen had it declared in parliament that her principal object in summoning them together was "the honour of God Almighty;" and a strange way she took to shew it. One of Mary's first acts had been to restore to *the Church* all the property of which it had been *unrighteously plundered* by her father; Elizabeth hastened to *appropriate* it all again. She also took possession of the *abbey lands* which Mary had given back to their rightful

owners. Having thus tried the affections of her faithful Lords and Commons, she proceeded to put in execution the project on which she had long resolved, and this was, to renounce the spiritual supremacy of the Pope, and establish her own authority in its stead; thus making herself supreme governor not only of the state, but of the Church, in other words, of all religion in the land. The act declares that to the sovereign belongs "all manner of spiritual or ecclesiastical jurisdiction to visit, reform, redress, order, correct, and amend all such heresies, schisms, &c. as by any manner of spiritual or ecclesiastical power can or may lawfully be reformed;" all which spiritual power, moreover, it expressly denies to the Pope. Nor was this all: a stringent oath was framed; and this oath was to be taken, not only by every bishop and dignitary of the Church, not only by every clergyman who had cure of souls, but by all the lay officials of the crown, by every judge, magistrate, and mayor; nay, the beadle and constable were no more exempt than His Grace the Archbishop and the Lord High Chancellor. No man could bear office in Church or state who would not acknowledge on his oath the Queen's supremacy; in other words, who would not deny his faith and cease to be a Catholic. I beg you to look this fact full in the face. This Protestant Queen, who in her coronation-oath had sworn to uphold the interests of the Catholic religion, excludes from every office in the state every Catholic who is not wicked enough to sacrifice his conscience and his religion to his worldly interests.

But Elizabeth was not yet satisfied: it was a small thing to disqualify the Catholic for bearing office in the state or ministering in the national church; he was also prohibited from maintaining the spiritual power of the Pope in words or writing, under the pain of forfeiting for the first offence all his goods and chattels, or, if the said goods and chattels were not worth 20*l.*, of being imprisoned for a year. For the second offence he was to incur the penalty of a *præmunire*, as it was called; and this was imprisonment for life. The third offence was to be accounted treason; that is to say—and I would have you think of this the next time you hear people talk of Popish cruelty—he was to be drawn

the gallows, hanged by the neck, then cut down *alive*, his bowels torn out while he was *alive*, and, last of all, his head cut off! Such was the mild treatment which "good Queen Bess" provided for her Catholic subjects; such were the measures by which "all mischiefs were to be amended, to the pleasure of Almighty God, the increase of virtue, and conservation of the peace and unity of the realm." But it was not enough to enact a law; there must be a special court to carry it into effect. The Queen was therefore empowered to create a permanent commission for trying all offences against the said enactment, which was to supersede the usual course of law, and from whose decisions there was no appeal. Of the deeds of this infamous court I shall have to speak hereafter: I mention its proposed erection here, that you may see the sort of machinery which was prepared for forcing Protestantism on the nation, and keeping it there when once it was forced on.

The statute of supremacy disposed of all official persons, whether spiritual or lay; that is to say, of all those who by their talents or position were likely to stand in the way of the government's designs: what remained was, to bring the mass of the people under the thumb of the law. The state-pope was enthroned; the next thing to be arranged was a state-religion, to which all good subjects were to conform, no matter what their private convictions might be. The state was to prescribe to the "free-born Briton" not only what pastors he should recognise, but what belief he should profess, and what worship he should practise, or at least frequent. A secret committee, as I have told you, had been appointed to remodel King Edward's Prayer-Book; and a bill was now brought into Parliament for what was called "the restoration of the English liturgy." You must not suppose, however, that the clergy had been idle all this time. Convocation, which was a sort of clerical parliament, had met, and had presented to the House of Lords a declaration of belief in the Catholic doctrines then most contested, and of adherence to the spiritual authority of the Pope; which declaration had likewise been subscribed by the two Universities of the land. This was an awkward business. The Church and the Parliament were placed in an attitude of

hostility one to the other, and that too in a matter in which the common sense of the nation pronounced the Church to be (to say the very least) most probably in the right. To get rid of this embarrassment, an ingenious expedient was hit upon, and this was, to oppose to the recognised authority of the Catholic hierarchy the semblance of a rival power. A public discussion was got up between the Catholic bishops and the most distinguished Protestant divines. This, it was predetermined by the government, should terminate only in one way, viz. in the discomfiture of the champions of the ancient faith. The bishops were allowed no refusal; dispute they must, *or judgment would be given against them*. And observe, the very fact of their disputing placed them in a false position, and gave an immense advantage to their adversaries. Of this the court-party were fully aware. They knew that to the nation looking on (and the populace were to be admitted as spectators of the fray), it would seem as if the matters in debate were still doubtful and unsettled questions, on which men might come to opposite conclusions. Authority there was none to decide on the issue of the conference, except the crown; and for Catholic bishops to dispute under such circumstances was like acknowledging the crown to possess the very supremacy it claimed. Sir Nicholas Bacon, a layman and a Protestant, was appointed to preside; the Archbishop of York being (perhaps) allowed to sit, for appearance sake, in dumb show by his side. The pretence of a discussion was all that was wanted, and the Protestants managed the matter their own way. In the first place, they chose the propositions for discussion, and worded them as they pleased, the Catholics not even being consulted. In the second place, the Catholics were allowed only two days' notice of the subjects of debate, while the Protestants had ample time for preparation; and even this short warning it was contrived to render useless to them: for, first, they were told they must *speak* in Latin; and next, that they were to *write* what they had to say in Latin; and lastly, that this writing was to be in English, and *not* in Latin. Then, again, it had been ordered by the Council that the Catholics should always begin the debate, and the Protestants always have the reply; the Ca

tholics also being refused the liberty of resuming the point which had been debated on the previous day,—a mode of proceeding which gave the Protestants a manifest advantage. The bishops were Englishmen, and Englishmen, it is said, like fair play; and when they saw what sort of justice was in store for them, they very wisely refused, on the morning of the second day, to carry the disputation further. On which the president, who was set to moderate between the parties, pronounced these ominous words: “As you will not let us hear you, you shall very shortly hear from us.” He was as good as his word; for “very shortly” two of the bishops who had been the boldest in exposing this pretty court-device were committed prisoners to the Tower, whilst the three others who had been present were, together with their clerical consultors, bound in their recognisances to appear from day to day till judgment should be given. In the end every one of them was heavily fined.

The conference being thus concluded to the satisfaction of the government, the bill for adopting the new Book of Common Prayer was again brought in. The Commons made as little difficulty about restoring the Protestant religion as only five years before they had done about restoring the Catholic. As I told you at the time, the nobles and gentry, taken as a body (for there were generous exceptions), were men of no religion; all they cared for was to stand well with the court and the ruling powers, and to “keep their own,” as they said. Protestants under a Protestant king, and Catholics under a Catholic queen, they turned again as the wind veered round. In the House of Lords, however, the bill encountered a spirited opposition, the whole episcopal bench and several lay peers being arrayed against it. It was carried by a majority of three.

What was carried? Merely a law, you may suppose, by which Protestantism became once more the national religion; which gave up the churches and the revenues thereof to the professors of the new opinions. All this *certainly followed*; and considering that the bulk of the people, *the middle and the lower classes*, were generally Catholics, *it was no slight hardship*, or rather, I should say, *no slight piece of tyranny*. But was this all? No; what was passed

was a bill of pains and penalties, by which any minister who should use any but the parliamentary Prayer-Book should, for the first offence, forfeit to the Queen the whole of his income for one year, and be imprisoned for six months; for the second offence, be imprisoned for twelve months, and be deprived of his living, or of any other benefice he might hold; and for the third offence, suffer imprisonment for life. If he chanced to hold no ecclesiastical benefice, he was, for the first offence, to be imprisoned one whole year; and for the second, during his life. Thus, by the tender mercies of the law, the Catholic clergy were called upon at once to choose between apostacy and beggary.

And did the people escape? Would you who read and I who write this little history have been left in peace to worship God according to the dictates of our conscience? Conscience; with what a laugh of scorn would the very mention of such a plea have been received! "What! not content," it would have been replied, "with the freedom which the state allows you? We put no violence on your conscience; *believe* what you please; all that we require is, that you should *profess* as the law directs. If this do not satisfy you, then be thankful that we permit you to keep your conscience in your pocket." Yes, it is no figure of speech, but in a manner literally true, that in the days of "good Queen Bess"—and, for the matter of that, many days afterwards, ay and not so very long ago, until it was supposed that the spirit of Catholicism was extinct—the people of this country were forced to keep their conscience in their pocket. For at this time it was enacted, that *all persons who should absent themselves from church on Sundays and holidays should forfeit for every such offence one shilling* (worth three of our money, besides being a much greater sum in those days), *to be levied by the churchwardens of the parish where such offence should be committed.* This fine, as we shall see, was afterwards much increased in amount, and levied too; but it is of great importance that every event should be noted in the order in which it occurred. Thus then stood the law; the people were to be made Protestants of, not, as the pulpit-orators of the present day would

fain persuade you, by Bible-reading or Gospel-preaching but by the sheer force of legal persecution. The people of this country submitted to the Protestant establishment, not through hatred of Popery, nor through love of Protestantism, but through fear,—fear of being robbed of their hard earnings, or being sent to gaol, if they did not, outwardly at least, conform to the religion which their rulers thrust upon them. One thing at least is very plain, that if Popery were so dreadful a piece of tyranny as newspaper writers and platform-speakers would make you believe, the people would have been glad enough to be rid of any thing so hateful, and would not have needed to be frightened out of it by the terror of the law. Facts speak for themselves.

But to proceed with my history. The Book of Common Prayer was now part and parcel of the law of the land; an act of Parliament adopted against the will of the Church by which I mean, not the clergy only, but the people. Of course nobody was bound in conscience to obey it; but then the clergy must be prepared to forfeit all their goods and suffer imprisonment for life, and the people to pay one shilling sterling every time they stayed away from church. Midsummer-day was fast approaching, the day on which the state-service was ordered to be used in all places of public worship; and to compel compliance on the part of the clergy, the government sent out commissioners under the royal authority to go through the rural districts and administer the oath of supremacy to the officials, ecclesiastical and lay. They were empowered to suspend or deprive all such as would not conform to the new religion, and to appoint others in their places; as also to proceed against the refractory by imprisonment, church censures, or any means whether legal or illegal. They were furnished with a body of injunctions, one of which was curious, as shewing the moral and social condition of the “reformed” clergy, that I will quote it here. After citing the scandal that had arisen to the church by the want of discreet and sober behaviour in many of the ministers, it directs that no priest or deacon shall marry without the permission given by the bishop of the diocese.

justices of the peace living next to the place where the woman hath made her most abode before marriage, nor without the good will of her parents or next kinsfolk, or, for lack of such, *of her master or mistress* where she liveth. Bishops also were not to marry without the approval of the metropolitan, and likewise *of commissioners appointed by the Queen* in such behalf.

Another injunction respecting the removal of holy images from the churches was the occasion of the grossest outrage. Some of the more violent reformers went beyond the royal wishes, and destroyed every painting or decoration in which the figures of our Blessed Lord and His Apostles were depicted, or which even represented the events of Bible history; and not content with this, they tore down all coats of arms, and broke in pieces the effigies which marked the monuments of the illustrious dead. Nay, their rage extended to the very bells that hung in the steeples, to the steeples themselves, and the buildings to which they were attached. The havoc that was done by these fanatics surpasses all belief; to such a pitch indeed did it arrive at last, that Elizabeth was compelled to interfere. The images were to be spared, provided—and I beg you to mark this—they were “not for any religious honour,” but were “the images of kings, princes, or nobles, estates of this realm, that had been put up for the only memory of them to their posterity.” Saints, martyrs, confessors, bishops, doctors, holy virgins, even the Virgin of virgins, the Blessed Mother of God, nay, the Crucified Himself, all might be broken, battered, ground to powder; but kings, princes, nobles, lords, gentlemen, and ladies, these it was sacrilege to touch, and something like high treason against our sovereign Queen and the majesty of these realms. Such was the *national* religion which Elizabeth set up in place of the Catholic, and such in its mind and spirit is the Established Church at the present day.

However, the question that interests us here is, how the clergy and the people acted, and in what manner they were treated. And first as to the bishops. The Parliament had not been dissolved a week, before they were summoned to the Queen's presence, and every motive urged to induce

them to yield to her pretensions. By death and exile the number of prelates then in occupation of sees had been reduced to fifteen ; they one and all refused, and were dismissed with threats and scorn. The government looked in vain for any colourable plea whereon to proceed against them ; and when, after much devising, nothing of the sort appeared, it was resolved to tender to each the oath of supremacy at such times as might seem expedient, in the hope of thus concealing from the eyes of the nation as much as possible the startling sight of a whole hierarchy suppressed by the mere fiat of the state, simply because they would not accept a new religion at its dictation. By the end of the year the episcopal bench was cleared ; one only of all the Catholic prelates was found base or weak enough to take the oath, and he had "always believed or professed," says Soames, "according to the last act of Parliament, which means the last enunciation of the royal will." The rest were deprived of their sees and sent to prison ; of whom some shortly died ; others succeeded in escaping to the Continent ; others, as time went on, were transferred to private custody ; while the few that remained lingered on in close confinement all their days. Another motive for delaying their ejection was the necessity of creating a Protestant episcopate ; for if the Catholic bishops refused to conform, who were to consecrate the new prelates, or to give them even the semblance of ecclesiastical authority ? Here, then, would be the place to tell you how the "bishops" of the state-church came into existence ; but as this would carry me too far away from my immediate object, I will only say that they were set up simply and solely by the royal power ; in violation of all law and precedent, both of the Church and of the realm ; and that for more than one just reason they never were regarded as true bishops by the Catholic Church. I say *never* ; for from that time to this, not a single "bishop" of the Established Church, not even the "Archbishop" of Canterbury, for all his high-sounding *title*, has been any thing else in the eyes of the ancient Catholic Church of this and of other lands but a simple *layman*.

The monasteries were now broken up. Some of the

religious sent adrift into the world were kindly sheltered by the ambassador of Spain, and conducted in safety to the coast of Flanders. Three whole convents of monks and nuns also found an asylum on the same hospitable shores; most of the latter choosing rather to abandon their native land than be denied the liberty of living in religious community. The rest shifted for themselves as best they could. Of the higher clergy, deans, prebendaries, archdeacons, and the leading members of the Universities, by far the greater number gave up their offices and emoluments sooner than take the obnoxious oath or adopt the parliamentary Prayer-Book; and many in consequence received practical proof of what the Protestants meant by liberty of conscience, by being put in prison. As to the clergy generally, though no exact account has come down to our days, it is plain from incidental testimony that great numbers must have remained constant in the faith. We find, for instance, that such was the deficiency of clergy, notwithstanding the restoration of those Protestant ministers who had been deprived in Mary's reign, that "for several years," says Hallam, "it was a common practice to appoint laymen, usually mechanics, to read the service in the vacant churches." "So many churches in country towns and villages were vacant," says Neal, "that in some places there was no preaching, nor so much as reading a homily, for many months together. In sundry parishes it was hard to find persons to baptise or bury the dead." "The new clergy," says Dr. Heylin, "was made up of cobblers, weavers, tinkers, tanners, card-makers, fiddlers, tailors, bagpipers, &c." In the diocese of Ely, we are told that in the year 1560 a hundred parishes had no ministers; and in that of Norwich, in the year 1562, one-third of the benefices was unoccupied; again, the Bishop of Bangor writes that he had but two preachers in all his diocese; nor is there any thing to shew that these three dioceses were worse off than the rest. But not the rural districts only, the towns also were destitute of competent instructors. In 1563, the Speaker of the House of Commons complained *that many of the great market-towns were without either school or preacher.* Again, it is a fact that for many years

the two Universities yielded but few candidates for Protestant orders, the great majority of the members remaining attached to the old religion. Oxford indeed was so "Popish" at heart, that Jewel, the Protestant Bishop of Salisbury, complained that there were not above two in that University of reformed opinions; and those, he adds, "so dispirited as to be good for nothing." Strype also records that as late as 1578 there were at Exeter college not more than four Protestants out of eighty members, "all the rest being secret or open Roman affectionaries;" and another annalist, Wood, writes that Oxford was "so empty after the Catholics left it, that there was very seldom a sermon preached in the University church." Such numbers were ejected from the several colleges, that "the University," he says, "seemed to be entirely destroyed;" he also tells us that the persons left at Oxford were so few and so illiterate, that an order came out "that such as were mean readers should con over before-hand once or twice the chapters and homilies, to the intent they might read to the better understanding of the people and the more encouragement of godliness." At the same time, leave was given to make use of the Common Prayer in the Latin tongue, "there being some danger," he says, "of losing that language in the University;" to which he adds, that there were but some three persons "that could preach with any reputation," and that sermons of the most ridiculous kind were constantly delivered.

But further; outward conformity was no proof of any belief in Protestantism. The "Church of England," so far from being founded on liberty of conscience, was not founded even on the mistaken convictions of its own adherents; on the contrary, it was forced upon the nation against the consciences both of those who rejected it and of those who conformed. Bishop Burnet says that "*the greatest part of the clergy retained their affections to the old superstition that those in King Edward's time had; so that if Queen Elizabeth had not lived so long as she did, till all that generation was dead, and a new set of men, better educated and principled, were grown up and put in their rooms, and if a prince of another religion had succeeded before that time, they had probably turned about*

again to the old superstition as nimbly as they had done before in Queen Mary's days." Thus, by the acknowledgment of one who wrote expressly in support of the English Reformation in general, and the Established Church in particular, it appears that the great bulk of the clergy who conformed to the state religion were men of no learning and no principle. Not a single man amongst them, be it observed, professed himself a Protestant till it was made penal to do otherwise; until, that is, it became a question of abandoning either their incomes or their faith.

And now as to the laity. Of peers of Parliament the oath of supremacy was not exacted; a master-stroke of policy, which conciliated those who by their position and influence might have given the government most trouble, and made them the more careless as to the fate of the clergy and the people. But to the mass of the population the law was by no means a dead letter. It has been asserted, indeed, says Hallam, that "by systematic connivance the Roman Catholics enjoyed a pretty free use of their religion for the first fourteen years of Elizabeth's reign. But this is not reconcilable with many passages in Strype's collections. We find *abundance of persons* harassed for recusancy, that is, for not attending the Protestant church, and driven to insincere promises of conformity. Others were dragged before ecclesiastical commissioners for harbouring priests, or for sending money to those who had fled beyond sea. Students of the inns of court, where Popery had a strong hold at this time, were examined in the Star-chamber as to their religion, and on not giving satisfactory answers were committed to the Fleet." Even during the first three years of her reign, "we find," says the same author, "instances of severity towards Catholics; and it is evident that their solemnities were performed only by stealth, and at much hazard. Thus, Sir Edward Waldegrave and his lady were sent to the Tower, in 1561, for hearing Mass and having a priest in their house. *Many others* about the same time were punished for the like offence;" among the rest, Lord Loughborough, who had been much favoured by the late Queen. Many of the Protestant bishops, unlike their Catholic predecessors in Mary's reign

were among the chief instigators of the persecution. In the same year the Bishop of Carlisle complained to Cecil that certain great men had hindered him from "punishing" the people as in his opinion they deserved; for, said he, "they neither acknowledge the Queen's majesty's supremacy, neither yet obey me as ordinary." In 1562 two of them are found informing the Council of a priest, who had been apprehended in the house of Lady Carew, and with a cruel playfulness suggesting that, "if this priest were put to some kind of torment, and so driven to confess what he knoweth, he might gain the Queen's majesty a good *mass* of money by the *Masses* that he hath said; but this we refer to your lordships' wisdom."

But Protestants have boasted that the Catholics generally attended the law service for some years. This, in the main, is true; but in what spirit, or from what motive, did they attend? Simply to save their shillings, and to prevent themselves getting into trouble—not from any liking for Protestantism or the "Prayer-Book;" and they thought themselves free from guilt because their neighbours did the same, and every body knew they acted from compulsion. It is a well-attested fact, that many who went to the Protestant church in public assisted privately at Mass; nay, a Catholic historian, who wrote in Elizabeth's reign, declares that many of the conformist priests themselves not only said Mass in private, but brought the Blessed Sacrament with them secretly to the churches, and there communicated such as they knew to be prepared to receive; while the eyes of the uninitiated they seemed to administer nothing but the Protestant "bread and wine." It must not be supposed, however, that the faithful clergy of the Church allowed them to remain in ignorance of the sin they were committing and abetting by thus putting the law of man before the law of God. Books were circulated among people, instructing them in their duty, and exposing errors of the new religion. In these publications, as Protestants have acknowledged, the Queen's title was not *peached*, nor her government assailed; yet—such was regard paid by the founders of the Protestant church to *boasted right of private judgment*—they were decl

be illegal, and a penalty set on reading or retaining them. It is admitted, then, that the Catholics attended the Protestant service "till," as Hallam says, "it came to be reckoned a distinctive sign of their having renounced their own religion. They frequented our churches because the law compelled them by law so to do, not out of a notion that very little change had been made by the Reformation." But from the first there were, as I have said, numbers who never even outwardly conformed; and in many parts of the country people of all ranks absented themselves from the churches.

Elizabeth's second Parliament was held in the year 1563. The Catholics had conducted themselves as peaceable subjects: Lord Montague could even say of them in Parliament, "They disturb not nor hinder the public affairs of the realm, neither spiritual nor temporal. They dispute not, they preach not, they disobey not the Queen, they cause no trouble nor tumults among the people; so that no man can say that thereby the realm doth receive any hurt or damage by them." "It cannot, as it appears to me," says Hallam, "be truly alleged that any greater provocation had as yet been given by the Catholics than that of pertinaciously continuing to believe and worship as their fathers had done before them. I request those who may hesitate about this to pay some attention to the order of time before they form their opinions." Pope Pius IV., who had succeeded Paul IV., so far from adopting any hostile measures against the Queen, had in 1560 and the following year, addressed conciliatory letters to her, in which he begged her to send ambassadors to the Council of Trent then sitting, and declared his readiness "to do all things needful both for the health of her soul and the establishment of her royal dignity." Anyhow, you would suppose that enough had been done in the way of penal legislation, particularly for the establishment of a religion which people would have you believe was embraced by a grateful and enthusiastic nation, exulting in its freedom from the shackles of Popish domination. What must be your surprise, then, when I tell you that Parliament was no sooner assembled than it set to work again to enact still more persecuting laws! As yet none but such as h

cure of souls, or held office under government, were required to take the oath of supremacy; the obligation was now extended to "all sorts and conditions of men." The oath was to be imposed, first, on all members of the House of Commons, all schoolmasters, private tutors, and attorneys; secondly, on all persons in holy orders, or who were connected with any ecclesiastical court, or who in words or writing defamed the established worship, or celebrated or attended any private Mass; in other words, on the whole Catholic population. The penalty of refusal was also increased. To the first division indeed, the oath was to be tendered only once, and on refusal they incurred the forfeiture of all their goods and chattels, and imprisonment for life; but to the second division, *the clergy and the people* (for they always go together), the oath was to be tendered twice, and on the second refusal the penalty was DEATH and that the most terrible of deaths. Yes, the statute books of this free country attest the truth of what I say the Englishman who dared to worship God as his father had done from time immemorial, did so at the risk of being savagely tortured to death; of being first hanged, then cut open alive, and his yet palpitating heart torn out of his body. Here was liberty of conscience with a vengeance!

Of course no one imagines that the Queen, or the government, or the Protestant bishops were anxious to put this murderous law into execution; no doubt they would have preferred that the people should submit quietly. They knew very well that if once the Catholics could be made outwardly to conform, their affection for the ancient worship would diminish, and that gradually they would tune up with the state religion; at any rate, their children would grow up Protestants. All that was wanted was their presence; time and the force of habit, they hoped, would do the rest. But there—mark you—the terrible engine ready for use whenever the interests of the state required and use it they did, and seemed to revel in the use as we shall see in the sequel.

Library of Christian Devotion.

THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION
OF THE
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.



By Permission.

LONDON:
BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.
READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

Feast of the Assumption of the B.V.M.

THE feast which the Church celebrates to-day (the 15th of August) is the last, and in some respects the greatest, of all the yearly festivals in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, so that, in some countries, it is even called Lady-day, or *the day of our Lady*, as though it were undoubtedly her principal festival; and the reason of this is obvious, namely, because her Assumption into Heaven is the consummation of all the other great mysteries of her most wonderful life; it is the birth-day of her eternal glory, the final crowning of all those acts and virtues of her past life which we celebrate singly in her other festivals. We have already commemorated her Immaculate Conception, her Nativity, her Presentation in the Temple, her Espousals to St. Joseph, her Annunciation by the blessed St. Gabriel, her Visitation of St. Elizabeth, her Purification forty days after the Birth of her Divine Son, and her Dolours, or most sacred *Compassion* with the Passion of our Lord; and now at length we are come to the last closing scene of the whole, her departure out of this world and entrance into the kingdom of Heaven.

There are two events, then, which are brought before our minds by this day's festival; first, the death of our blessed Lady, and secondly, her resurrection and assumption into glory. We propose to say a few words about each of these events separately.

And first, concerning her death. Death, as we all know, is a consequence and penalty of sin; it had been expressly denounced beforehand as the punishment of sin: "*in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death*" (Gen. ii. 17). And likewise our first parents dis-

Almighty God, therefore "by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death" (Rom. v. 12). But it is the doctrine of the Catholic Church that the Blessed Virgin Mary was, by the special grace of God, preserved pure and spotless from every stain of sin, "not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 27). Wherefore, then, did she suffer death?

We know, indeed, that her Son our Lord Jesus Christ, who, not by grace but by nature, was utterly "unspotted and undefiled" (1 St. Pet. i. 19), and "in whom there was no sin" (1 St. John iii. 5), yet suffered death, even the death of the cross; but this was necessary and for a special purpose, "that through death He might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil" (Heb. ii. 14). Our Blessed Lady could not do this; being herself a child of Adam, redeemed by the grace of God and through the merits of her own Son, she was not capable of redeeming others. Again, then, it may be asked, Wherefore did she suffer death?

One or two early Christian writers, moved perhaps by some such considerations as these, even expressed a doubt whether she really *had* died. They had never heard any certain account of her last hours and final decease; and they thought it not improbable that she had been exempted by some special privilege from the common lot of men, and had been removed out of this world into the immediate presence of God, without passing through "the midst of the shadow of death."

firmity ; for since, by God's grace, she had been preserved from original sin, and her pure flesh had never known defilement, she was saved also from disease and malady, and all that weakens and destroys the bodily frame. But death came to her upon the wings of love ; the tie which bound her soul to her body was loosened by the burning aspirations of that intense desire wherewith she thirsted for the presence of her God.

"As the hart panteth after the fountains of water," so her soul had panted for a re-union with her Son, or rather for a renewal of His visible presence which should never again be interrupted, from the very moment that He ascended up into Heaven. From that moment the language of the royal Psalmist had been hers : "O God, my God, for Thee my soul hath thirsted ; for Thee my flesh, oh, how many ways !" (Ps. lxii. 2.) Nevertheless, for the great love that she bore to the disciples ransomed by the blood of her Son, and now her own adopted children, she consented to linger yet awhile upon earth—an exile from the throne which stood prepared for her in Heaven—in order that she

her dissolution was at hand, she was living in the holy city. Thither also were suddenly gathered together the Apostles from other parts of the world, either having been moved by some divine inspiration to undertake this journey at that time, or else having been actually brought thither by the ministry of angels, even as Habacuc was miraculously transported to Daniel in the lions' den (Dan. xiv. 35), or as Philip the deacon was miraculously removed from the company of the Eunuch whom he had baptised, and was set down in Azotus (Acts viii. 39).

The Apostles then (and doubtless other Christians also) stood around the couch whereon the Blessed Virgin lay, and listened in tearful silence to the parting injunctions of their dear Mother. They wept; for how could they do otherwise, knowing as they did from the lips of Mary herself that she was about to be taken away from them? The dearest and most precious memorial of their risen and ascended Lord, she who had been their most faithful counsellor, their brightest example, and most constant consolation under all their trials and sufferings, was about to close her earthly pilgrimage, and to be received into the beatific presence: but that which was *her* gain would be *their* heavy loss: it was to lose Jesus, as it were, a second time. They wept, therefore, as dutiful and affectionate children must needs weep by the bedside of a dying parent. But Mary herself wept not; she awaited with calm and patient expectation, or rather with most earnest longings, the moment of her release. She addressed her sorrowing children with words of affectionate encouragement, commending to them the Church, the body of her Son, and assuring them of the continuance of her maternal love and watchful care and protection in Heaven, even as they had already experienced it upon earth. By and by, when she ceased to speak, the chamber was suddenly filled with a bright light, and with the sound of hymns and canticles sung by the heavenly host, who had come down to do honour to the *Queen of Heaven*, and to accompany her in her passage out of *this world* into the realms of eternal bliss and glory. Then *the heavens* were opened, and the Son of God Himself descended to receive the pure and stainless spirit of His M

ther, which in that instant forsook the body, and was received into its appointed place in Heaven, being raised far above angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, and placed at the right hand of her divine Son.

Should these pages fall into the hands of any thoughtful Protestant, he may be disposed perhaps to make objection to the picture which we have drawn of the death of Mary, as being something too bright and glorious ever to have been the lot of a mere creature, a child of Adam like ourselves. But we would earnestly entreat such an one to call to mind all that he has ever seen, or heard, or read of the death-bed experiences of holy servants of God, either in this or in any earlier age of the Church, and then to ask himself whether it is not reasonable to expect that something still higher and more blessed than any thing which has happened to any of these, something altogether special and extraordinary, should have been the privilege of her who, alone of all human creatures that ever existed, was never separated from God; who was created and lived for Him alone; from whom He took His own human nature; in a word who was *His Mother*? Can any man who really

saints could "count all things but as dung" that they might "gain Christ," how much less could any portion *her* treasure be on earth, who had carried in her chaste womb the price of man's redemption! Neither, again, was it possible that troublous doubts and misgivings about the uncertainty of final salvation should find any place at the deathbed of the Mother of Jesus; for if it was given to the Apostle of the Gentiles, towards the close of his life, to exclaim with confidence, "I am ready to be sacrificed, and the time of my dissolution is at hand: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: as to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord the just judge will render to me in that day" (2 Tim. iv. 8), how much more would not the same privilege belong to one whose union with God was unspeakably closer and more perfect than that of any apostle who ever lived!

Or, again, if the Church prays for every Christian soul as it leaves the body, that the bright company of the angels may come forth to meet it; that the triumphant and white-robed army of martyrs may draw near to welcome it; that the choir of virgins may receive it with exulting hymns; that Jesus may lift up the light of His countenance, mild and gracious, upon it; that the heavens may be opened to it, and that it may be received into the city of the heavenly Jerusalem;—if all this, I say, is what we are taught to hope and pray for in the case of ordinary Christians departing out of this world, what may we not believe concerning the death of the Blessed Virgin, who was at once the Queen of angels and of saints, of virgins and apostles, yea, the very Queen of Heaven, and the Mother of our God?

Yea, Mary's death must needs have been such as we have described it; not merely calm and peaceful, but even triumphant and glorious; and it has always been so celebrated by the Church from the very beginning, under the various titles of the Sleep, or the Rest, or the Passage of *our Blessed Lady*. "Mary died; but her death was a mere *fact*, not an *effect*; and when it was over, it ceased to *be* her death, that she might live; she died as a matter of *fact* (as you may call it), to fulfil what is

the debt of nature, not primarily for herself, or because of sin, but to submit herself to her condition, to glorify God, to do what her Son did ; not, however, as her Son and Saviour, with any suffering, or for any special end ; not with a martyr's death, for her martyrdom had been before it ; not as an atonement, for man could not make it, and One had made it, and made it for all ; but in order to finish her course, and to receive her crown."

Mary then was dead ; and her sacred body—that body which had been not only the temple of the Holy Ghost, as the bodies of all Christians are, but the very tabernacle of God Incarnate—was borne by the Apostles to a sepulchre already prepared for it in the valley of Jehoshaphat. There it was buried with fitting rites and ceremonies, amidst the sobs and tears of the faithful who accompanied it to the tomb, and who crowded round with eager reverence to take a last view of those features which they knew and loved so well, and which were now about to be removed from their sight for ever. They were still bright and lovely as with the freshness of life and youth ; there was no trace of age or suffering about them, no cold rigidity of death ; but the lips seemed still to speak, and the face to smile, as though the body were not yet forsaken by the immortal spirit whose dwelling-place it had so lately been. Long and lovingly they gazed upon the beautiful corpse ; but at length the gorgeous veil which had covered it during its procession from Jerusalem to the tomb was again placed over it ; the stone with which the entrance to the sepulchre was to be closed, was securely fastened ; and the faithful returned, silently and in tears, to their respective homes.

Yet a few still lingered behind,* unable to tear themselves away from the last resting-place of what was so dear

* What follows need not be taken as literally and certainly true. *We shall repeat what is the most accredited tradition of the Church ; but our readers must remember that all which is of faith with reference to this day's festival—that is, all which they are bound to believe under pain of sin—is this, that our Blessed Lady is no longer upon earth, but in Heaven.*

to them, and foreknowing probably, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the wonder that was about to be performed; these few kept watch around the tomb, both by day and night, until the third day; and during the whole of this time, an invisible company of angels were their companions, filling the air with the sweet harmony of their voices, singing and praising God. But on the third day this heavenly music ceased; and about the same time there arrived at Jerusalem an Apostle—the only one still living who had not been present at the Blessed Virgin's decease, who, as soon as he had heard of the loss which the Church had sustained, earnestly besought his brethren to indulge him with one last look at the countenance of the Mother of his Lord. Not unwillingly they yielded to his importunity; and a company of Apostles and disciples set forth with St. Thomas to go and open the tomb in the valley of Jehoshaphat. When they arrived there and heard that the angelic harmony had ceased, they knew full well what it was that had taken place. They knew that the body of their Mother, like that of her Divine Son, was no longer where they had laid it, in the grave. Nevertheless, they persevered in their intention of opening the tomb, and found as they had anticipated. Nothing was there; nothing, that is, but the veil wherewith the body had been covered, and the flowers wherewith the holy women had carefully adorned the sepulchre when first it received its precious deposit. Moreover, fresh flowers of most exquisite colour and fragrance had sprung up where the body had been laid; the white lilies of virginal purity, and the blood-red rose of the martyr's charity: but the body itself was gone. Jesus had come down from Heaven, attended by an innumerable company of angels and "of the Church of the first-born," and bringing with Him the blessed soul of His Virgin Mother. Then, in obedience to His divine word, this soul re-united itself to her sacred body, which, like His own, had not been suffered to see *corruption*; and immediately the body arose, bright, glorious, and immortal, and passed at once to that exalted throne which Jesus had prepared for her at His own right hand in the highest heaven.

Such is the event, then, which the Church celebrates to-day under the title of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. "This day Mary the Virgin went up to Heaven; rejoice, for she reigneth with Christ for ever;"—"she is taken up into Heaven, where the King of kings sitteth upon His starry throne;"—"the holy Mother of God is exalted to heavenly kingdoms above choirs of angels;"—"the Queen standeth at the King's right hand in a vesture of gold;" this is the language which the Church has chosen wherewith to do honour to so great a festival; and although she has never defined this bodily Assumption of our Lady, so that it should be an article of the faith, like the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, yet what Christian is there whose heart does not recognise, when once he has reflected upon it, the beautiful fitness (if I may so speak) of this event in the life of our dear Lady, as the natural and almost necessary correlative of those events in the life of our Blessed Lord?

Protestants not unfrequently urge it as an objection against the Catholic Church, that she represents the life of our Lady as, in some sort, a counterpart of the life of our Lord. You celebrate, they say, the Nativity of Christ, and you celebrate also the Nativity of Mary; if Good Friday is consecrated to the Passion of Christ, the Friday before it is consecrated to the *Compassion* of Mary; and in like manner, if you keep holy the day of Christ's Ascension into Heaven, so also you keep holy another day in honour of the Assumption of Mary. This is what is often objected to us by Protestant controversialists, and we at once admit that it is so; it is a necessary consequence of our belief that Mary was the Mother of Jesus; we think that there is nothing unnatural or extraordinary in supposing the life of the Mother to have been like the life of the Son; rather that it would have been strange and unnatural had it been

Lord which corresponds to this is called the feast of the *Ascension*. Now there is a difference between these two words, which accurately expresses also the difference between the two events. Our Lord *ascended*, or *went up*, into Heaven, by His own power, by virtue of His divine omnipotence ; but our Blessed Lady was *assumed*, or *taken up* into Heaven, not by any inherent power of her own, but by the grace and favour of Almighty God. “ Who is this that cometh up from the desert flowing with delights, *leaning upon her beloved?*” (Cant. viii. 5.) Jesus went up by virtue of that power which He had by nature as the Son of God ; Mary was taken up by the will and favour of her Almighty Son, conferring this privilege upon her whom He had chosen to be His Mother. The Ascension was an act of God, acting by and for Himself ; the Assumption was a special grace bestowed by Him upon the best and purest of His creatures.

Thus it is clear that we are as far as possible from identifying these two events, and representing them as really the same in their character and circumstances ; we only say that they correspond to one another, and that the one is as it were the natural and almost necessary correlative of the other. For consider ; we believe that Jesus is ascended into Heaven, not in His divine nature only, but in His human nature also ; not with His soul only, but with his body also. The very same body which was conceived in the Virgin’s womb and nourished at her breast ; which was nailed to the cross and laid in the tomb ; that very same body is now ascended into Heaven, and sits there on the throne of God for ever and ever. And can we believe that the flesh of Mary, of which that sacred body was formed, was allowed to moulder and rot in the grave, and to become the food of worms ? Is there not something odious and revolting in the very idea ? Surely it is most repugnant to every feeling of gratitude of which the human breast is capable, to think that the Son of Mary should so repay the debt He condescended to owe to His Mother, that He, whose commandment it is that children should honour their father and mother, and who promised that He would not fail to reward the

of a cup of cold water to the meanest disciple, should suffer "the womb that bare Him and the breasts which He had sucked," the heart whence He had received His blood, the hands which had ministered to the wants of His helpless infancy, and the feet which had so assiduously waited upon Him during His whole life, to be dissolved into dust and ashes and to mingle with the clay of the earth. We are taught by holy Scripture itself, that it was not *possible* that the flesh of Christ should "see corruption" (Ps. xv. 10; Acts ii. 24); neither, therefore, was it fitting that the flesh of Mary, from which the flesh of Christ was taken, should suffer that degradation.

Observe, I am not putting forward this argument as being in any way the ground of our belief in the Assumption of our Lady; far from it; the real ground of our belief in that event is of course the traditional teaching of the Church; but I say that the consideration we have suggested is such as should oblige all Christians to acknowledge the reasonableness of this belief, even if they will not accept it as true; if they refuse to believe the fact of the Assumption themselves, at least they should abstain from bringing railing accusations against those who do believe it. For, as it has been well observed, "to sympathise with this fact but two things are required: one is the belief that Mary is the Mother of God; and the other is a belief in the resurrection of the body. They who believe in the doctrine of the Incarnation—that is, who believe that Jesus is very God and very Man; God of the substance of His Father, begotten from all eternity; and Man of the substance of His Mother, born eighteen hundred and fifty-two years ago in the stable of Bethlehem,—and who cannot therefore deny to Mary the dignity of Mother of God; and who also believe that article of the Creed which they often repeat, 'the resurrection of the body;' these persons are bound, we think, to concede at least this much, that our belief, that Mary's resurrection has forestalled the great day, is a most reasonable belief. God is omnipotent; therefore He had assuredly the power to raise the body of His Mother."

is expected; they should believe and rejoice in the memory of so glorious an event, as the Church year by year encourages them to do upon this day, and as all her faithful children have ever delighted in doing for the last 1500 years; but even of those who are aliens to the true fold, as many as name the name of Christ, and "confess that He is come in the flesh," should certainly acknowledge as much as this, that the Assumption of His Mother into Heaven, in body as well as in spirit, was at least a *probable* consequence of His own Ascension.

There is yet another fact also, which may not unfitly be urged upon the consideration of those Protestants who are scandalised by the teaching of the Catholic Church upon this subject; we mean, the fact which we read in holy Scripture itself, that at the resurrection of our Lord "many bodies of the saints that had slept arose, and coming out of the tombs, came into the holy city, and appeared to many" (St. Matt. xxviii. 52, 53). Now, it has been always commonly believed, that the saints who were thus awakened from the sleep of death before the great and final day, were not restored to their friends upon earth merely that they might taste again of the bitterness of death, and again be consigned to the dark silence and to the corruption of the grave; but that they were suffered to retain the bodies which they had thus recovered, and with them were translated into Heaven to accompany the triumphal Ascension of their Lord. This, I say, has always been the common belief of Christians, and certainly it is a belief which commands itself as reasonable and true to every pious soul; and his be so, the Assumption of our Blessed Lady may be said to become at once a matter of certainty. For those who believe the resurrection and ascension of many, can have no difficulty in believing the resurrection and ascension of one, especially when that one is the Mother of Him who, in His Godhead, is now reigning in Heaven. There are few persons who would not allow that it was only just and reasonable that Mary should surpass all other saints.

then, the general resurrection of all mankind in the end of the world was anticipated in the case of these "many saints," who "came out of the tombs and appeared many" at the time of our Lord's Resurrection, may we not or rather *must* we not, believe, that the body of Mary too not dissolved into dust and ashes, but has been raised long since "in glory and incorruption," "a spiritual body, having put on immortality," and is now "always with the Lord?"

If Protestants would think over these facts with the calm and serious attention which they deserve, they would no longer be scandalised at the doctrine of Catholics as to the Assumption of the Mother of God, but would themselves acknowledge it as not only possible, but even in the highest degree probable. And this conviction of its probability should be still further strengthened by the consideration of this remarkable fact—remarkable, that is, supposing the Assumption to be what Protestants in general accuse of being, "a fiction of the dark ages,"—that among all the innumerable relics which have been preserved in the Catholic Church from the very earliest times, including relics most of the holy Apostles themselves, and of others of the same age, none whatever are any where supposed to exist but the body of the most Holy Virgin. Protestants indeed imagine that all these early relics are fictitious, and never really belonged to the persons whose relics they profess to have. But this makes no difference to our present argument; rather, it makes our argument very much stronger; for it was the habit of the ancient Christians, as Protestants would have us believe, to *pretend* to have relics which they did not really possess, whence comes it that they never pretended to have any of the Blessed Virgin Mary? It was easy to say that a certain church contained the body, or portion of the body, of the Blessed Virgin, as to say that it contained the head or the whole body of St. Peter or St. Paul, supposing that nothing was known or believed of the Christians which would have at once convicted such an assertion as false. But it is not so with the Virgin Mary, but she

Prince of the Apostles. Yet no such claim was ever made. Rome claimed to have the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul, Spain claims the body of St. James; and other countries and churches make a similar claim for the bodies of the other Apostles, and of the early saints and martyrs; but no church or country claims, or ever has claimed, to be possessed of the body of the Mother of God; they may claim to have the veil wherewith her body was covered, or some other relic more or less intimately connected with her, but not one of them claims to possess her body. If the belief of the Catholic Church be true, that her body was reunited to her soul, and that they were together taken up into Heaven, this fact is at once accounted for; but if otherwise, Protestants are bound to find some other explanation, which shall be equally reasonable and satisfactory.

We have said thus much upon the arguments that might be urged, from reason and from history, in support of the Catholic belief of the Assumption of our Lady, for the sake of Protestants into whose hands these pages may fall, and who have either never thought of the subject at all, or have been taught to ridicule and scoff at the history as a mere superstitious fable. To Catholics, we well know, much of what we have said will have been needless; some portion perhaps may have almost sounded offensive, as though seeming to admit a doubt as to the credibility of this high and glorious privilege of our Blessed Mother, a privilege which the loving instinct of all true Catholics feels and knows to have been here, almost as the necessary consummation of what she had before received. They feel that it could not possibly have been otherwise; that the honour of Almighty God absolutely required, as it were, this supreme exaltation of one standing in so near a relation to Himself; that that most wonderful miracle, whereby a creature became the Mother of her Creator, would have been in a manner imperfect, had she not received that recompense of glory which is involved in the idea of her Assumption.

Popish Persecution.

JAMES I.—GEORGE IV.

IN my last I told you something about the condition of Catholics during the times of the Tudors; that is, up to the death of "good Queen Bess;" and I think you will agree with me when I say, that degraded and dishonoured as the Catholic Faith then was in England, the dishonour really belongs, not to us Catholics, who were the sufferers, but to those whom you have been taught to worship as your "Protestant forefathers" and the glorious Reformers. You have seen how the savage monster Henry, and after him Cromwell and Cranmer, the wicked ministers who acted in young Edward's name, and lastly the vain and heartless Elizabeth, each and all sent to the stake or to the gibbet those who denied the unrighteous claim of a temporal sovereign to be considered the spiritual head of the living Church of God; and now we will go on to inquire whether it fared better with Catholics under the rule of the Stuarts and those of the Orange and Hanover lines, who came, each in their turn, after Elizabeth; and I think we shall find that, though, as a matter of fact, fewer persons were hung or burnt at the stake for their faith under the new race of kings, yet the personal and civil condition of Catholics was not much changed for the better.

At the death of Elizabeth, the nation, and with it the Church established by the nation, had long since severed itself from the See of Rome; and the cruel measures of *that queen* had gone far towards reducing the numbers of Catholics in England to a very scanty few. So we hear little of fresh laws passed forbidding appeals to Rome, or any *thing else* of that general kind. Hitherto persecution had

Historical Library.

POPISH PERSECUTION;

OR,

A SKETCH OF THE PENAL LAWS.

No. II.—JAMES I.—GEORGE IV.



By Permission.

LONDON:

JRNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

1852.

[Price 1d]

Scotland. In his first speech from the throne, he said, that "so far from increasing the burdens" of Catholics "with Rehoboam," he had, "so much as either time, occasion, or law could permit, lightened them." And as to those who had been born and brought up Catholics, he says, "I would be sorry to punish their bodies for the errors of their minds, and the reformation whereof must come only of God and the true Spirit." But he was a vain and foolish man and a very weak king, and he was forced in a great measure to please the people in order to secure his throne. So, in the first year of his reign, he allowed a law to be passed confirming the statutes of Elizabeth, and enacting that two-thirds of the estates of Catholics which had been seized should be kept in the king's hands after the late owner's death, till all arrears of penalties were paid, and then given up to the heir, *if he were a Protestant*. Any one who went beyond the seas and did not return within one year, was rendered incapable of inheriting lands or goods. Women, and all persons under 21 years of age, could not leave the kingdom without permission from the king or his council; and no one was allowed to teach in any school or family without license from the Protestant bishop appointed by the king. The fines which Elizabeth had enforced on all who would not come to Protestant worship, together with all arrears, began now to be so rigorously exacted, that many Catholic families were suddenly reduced to beggary. This deceit on the part of the king, together with the sense of their own wants and sufferings, galled the Catholics most painfully, and led to that event with which you are all so familiar, under the name of "the Gunpowder Plot." I shall reserve what I have to say about this famous plot to another occasion. For the present I will only make one remark upon it, namely, that it is quite certain that very few Catholics knew any thing at all about it (not a dozen altogether); and that the two Jesuit priests to whom it became known only in confession, did all that lay in their power to persuade the conspirators to abandon their purpose. Nevertheless, the fury of the nation being once roused, its anti-catholic rulers were much too wise and cunning to neglect the golden opportunity offered to them

for enforcing with redoubled energy the penal laws already existing, and adding new spirit to the Popish persecution.

I must tell you in detail what new oppression was enacted. First, it was ordered that every Papist who conformed to the law-Church should receive "the Sacrament" in his parish church within a year, and once every year afterwards, under a penalty of 20*l.* for the first offence, 40*l.* for the second, 60*l.* for the third, and so on, half the money going to the king and half to the informer. Nay, the churchwardens were to be rewarded with forty shillings for every "recusant" who absented himself from the Protestant church; and they were to return the names of such people every year to the quarter-sessions. The state bishops, or any two justices of the peace, were empowered to force the oath, acknowledging the king's supremacy and disowning that of the Pope, on every person of the age of eighteen and upwards who had not received the Sacrament twice in the preceding year, or on any stranger passing through their neighbourhood: those who refused the oath were ordered to be imprisoned till the next quarter-sessions, and if they refused it then, they were subjected to the pains of a *præmunire*, which I explained to you in my last. If any gentleman went abroad to serve a foreign prince, he was bound to give a bond, with sureties in 20*l.* at the least, not to be reconciled to the Church of Rome; and if he went abroad without taking the oath, he was accounted a felon. If a person betrayed a "Popish recusant," or any one who entertained a priest, and contrived to convict him, he was rewarded with a third of the convict's goods. What is more, all "Popish recusants" were forbidden to practise the common or civil law, to be counsellors, advocates, attorneys, proctors, or clerks, or to bear any commission in either army or navy, under pain of 100*l.* for every offence. Nay, if a man married a Papist, he was shut out from all these posts of honour and profit, and fined also if he did not repair to the Protestant church once a month at least, and receive the Sacrament as the law enjoined, and bring up his children in (what the law termed) the true religion. Such married women too forfeited their lands and dowers, and could inherit none of their husband's property. No Por

recusant could appear in any court of law, either as witness or plaintiff, or defendant. Every householder, of whatever religion, who kept any Catholic servants, was to pay a fine of 10*l.* every lunar month, that is, thirteen times in the year for every servant. If any one was married according to the Catholic form, he lost all lands that might belong to his wife; the wife, too, could inherit no property whatever from her husband. And if the man married a wife who had no lands, then he was punished with a fine of 100*l.* instead. The same fine was laid on all who did not take their children to the Protestant church to be baptised within a month after birth. And further, they did not stay the hand of persecution here: they pursued their victims to the grave and even there they scarcely suffered them to rest in peace for it was ordered, that if any Catholic was buried except in a Protestant churchyard, those who caused him to be so buried should be fined 20*l.* If any Papist was patron of an English living, he could not present to it, though every infidel and atheist could do so. Whoever brought into England any Romish Missal or Psalter was fined, the book forfeited, and any two justices of the peace were actually empowered to enter the houses and lodgings of Papists, or of those whose wives were Papists, and to *deface and burn any crucifix*, beads, Popish relic, or book, which they might think it unfit for such recusant to have. The crucifixes together with any relic of value, to be *defaced* at the next quarter-sessions. And here I cannot help remarking, the way, that this *defacing* of the image of our blessed Saviour, which was thus enjoined by the laws of a nation calling itself Christian, is precisely the very test which has been adopted before now by the rulers and magistrates of some heathen nations, as a proof on the part of the person doing it of his renunciation of Christianity. In China, Japan and some other countries, any person who was suspected either of teaching or believing the Christian faith, was *upon to trample under foot*, or otherwise *deface*, the *fix*; if he consented, he was considered to be one of *selves*—a heathen idolater who blasphemed Christ. *he refused*, he was immediately condemned as a C
So in this country numbers both of priests and la

ferred death rather than consent to this very *defacement* of the crucifix, which these reformers of Christianity here enjoined by law.

But to return to our history. The king, as we have said, was personally opposed to the barbarous laws we have been setting before you; but he lacked the goodness and the courage to set himself against the tide, and so he gave his consent to whatever the Protestant Parliament might choose to enact against Catholics. The Parliament, on more than one occasion, prayed for "a more rigorous execution of the laws against the Papists;" but this the king refused. In fact, all the kings of the Stuart line were *personally* opposed to the persecution of their Catholic subjects; but they were very weak, and allowed the Protestant feelings of their subjects and Parliaments to carry every thing before them. It was the nation, and more especially the National Church, which urged forward all these disgraceful measures for the degradation and persecution of Catholics in life and in death.

Charles I., who came to the throne in 1625, was married to a Catholic princess; he was therefore inclined in every way to lighten the burdens of the oppressed race; and probably he would have done so, had it not been for the union of two very powerful parties on this one point. On the one hand were the high Church-of-England men, headed by Archbishop Laud, men whose rallying cry was "Church and King," and who thought that the cause of the crown and of the English Church must stand or fall together; and on the other were the Puritans, who were now beginning to gain strength in England; a body of men who took their standard of doctrine and practice, not from Christ and His Apostles, but from Knox and Calvin; men who were furious against forms and ceremonies of every kind, and who at heart thirsted for the blood of the High-Church party as keenly as for that of the Papists. But the circumstances of the times were strange; and differing as these parties did the one from the other, the zeal of both was united in one point—the destruction of the Catholics. From the very first the Protestant Parliament was loud in its outcry against Papists. Their first remonstrance to

king complained of the growth of Popery, and (notwithstanding the frequent executions and heavy penalties of the last reign) of the many pardons which had been granted to recusants and priests. In the next session they declared all "Papists and Arminians to be enemies of the commonwealth," meaning by Arminians the High-Church party. So violent was the feeling of the nation against "Popery," that in the first nine years of the king's reign, we are told "that in twenty-nine counties of England 11,970 recusants were convicted;" and it was brought as one special charge against a statesman of the day, that he had granted letters of grace to seventy-four recusants within four years, and in the same period had discharged sixty-four priests from prison. We are not surprised, then, to hear Archbishop Laud saying of the Papists at this time, that "they lived more miserable lives than if they were in the Inquisition in many parts beyond the seas and if the placing of our fellow-creature in this state be not persecution," he adds, "I confess I know not what is."

As soon as the Long Parliament began its sittings, "altars, images, and crucifixes were ordered to be destroyed, just as if the nation hated any thing that could remind them of Christ and of His sacred Cross and Passion; and soon after, on the unsupported evidence of journeyman tailor, who swore that, while walking in the fields, he had heard some persons talking of a massacre Protestants, they ordered all priests and Jesuits to be seized and put in prison. Moreover, the two houses of Parliament, "out of detestation to that abominable idolatry as in the Mass," declared "they never would give consent any toleration of the Popish religion in Ireland, or in other of his Majesty's dominions." The lowest order of the London mob, porters and coalheavers, 15,000 in number, were got together to declare their alarm for the safety of the true religion against the attacks of Papists. *women also presented a petition expressing their fear of the commission of wholesale massacres, and other dreadful outrages on their sex, by the abominable*

up with war against his Commons to afford us much to say about the condition of Catholics ; but when he was beheaded, and the Puritans had all the power in their hands, you may be sure that the work of Popish persecution was not neglected. In 1643 they ordered that the lands of all Papists should be confiscated, as well as those of persons who harboured any Popish priest or Jesuit, or were present at Mass, or suffered their children or grandchildren to be brought up in the Catholic faith, or who, being twenty-one years old, did not abjure the Bishop of Rome. Liberty of conscience, by another statute, was to be allowed to any who did not profess "Atheism, Popery, Prelacy, or any damnable heresy to be enumerated by the Parliament." In 1655 a new law was passed, depriving the Catholics of even the little shadow of civil liberty which had been left to them ; for it was enacted that "persons who do or shall profess the Roman Catholic religion shall be disabled for ever to be elected or to give any vote in the election of any member to serve in Parliament." Nor was it merely the loss of civil rights that Catholics had to complain of at this time ; it appears that "four servants of the Commonwealth" formed themselves into a kind of joint-stock company for the purpose of trafficking in money paid as the price of the blood of Catholics. These men gloried in their zeal against Popery, so as to make it even a subject of boasting that "the like had not been done by any others since the reformation of religion." In their list of priests captured and killed, we find thirteen who had been executed, ten condemned to death but who died in prison, four who were banished, and several still in confinement. And all this was done by four men only, and in London ; how many other "servants of the Commonwealth" were at the same work in the country we do not know.

When Charles II. was unsuccessfully fighting for his father's crown, he had been mainly supported by the Catholic party ; and when he fled from Worcester field, it was in the houses of Catholics that the young king found a refuge, and often and often was he sheltered in the priests' hiding-place. But in spite of this fact, and in spite of his marriage with Catherine of Portugal, a Catho

princess, and in spite of his own convictions that the Catholic religion was the only true faith, still our condition was not bettered in his reign. The moment that the king expressed an intention of relaxing the rigour of existing laws, the two houses of Parliament remonstrated as usual. "Toleration" was odious to the ears of Englishmen; "liberty of conscience" was understood to mean "liberty to Protestants." They even demanded the enactment of new "laws to check the progress of Popery;" and accordingly a royal proclamation was issued by the selfish and unprincipled king, ordering all Catholic priests to quit the kingdom under pain of death. In the next year it passed into law that "all meetings of more than five individuals, besides those of the family," were henceforth to be "unlawful conventicles;" for a third offence the penalty being 100*l.* or transportation for seven years: and rigorously was it carried out, spies and informers breaking every where into private houses, and disturbing the peace of families. You know how God at this time thought fit to punish the sins of England with plague and fire; and perhaps you may have seen "the Monument" near London Bridge. On that Monument was put up an inscription declaring that the fire of London was the work of the Papists, though, after the closest parliamentary inquiry not a shadow of proof could be found to warrant such an assertion; yet this inscription, though erased by King James II., was again put up by William the Dutchman and has only lately been removed. When the Duke of York, the king's brother, was married to a Catholic, a panic arose, and it was ordered that all persons holding any office—civil, naval, or military—should take the oath of allegiance and supremacy at the next quarter-session and receive the Sacrament in open church on some day; if they neglected or refused to make this declaration they were to be fined 500*l.*, and disabled from becoming *executors or guardians, or suitors in a court of law.* C' afterwards, in fear of the popular feelin

in taking its part in this renewed outcry against Catholics; its bishops assembled in council at Lambeth Palace, and ordered that all Englishmen who had taken any orders in the Church of Rome should quit the kingdom under pain of death; that every subject who went to Mass in the chapel of the queen or the ambassador should be fined 100*l.* and be imprisoned for one year; and that any Papist, or reputed Papist, who dared to enter a royal palace should be thrown into prison, or if he was a peer of the kingdom, be committed to the Tower. The next step in Parliament was to draw up an oath which every member was forced to sign, denying transubstantiation, and declaring the invocation of the Saints and adoration of the blessed Virgin Mary to be superstitious and idolatrous; and on occasion of this bill being passed in the House of Lords, one of the noble peers declared in his place in the house that "he would not have so much as a Popish dog there (at the palace); not so much as a Popish cat to purr or mew about the king."

I must reserve for another opportunity a full account of the plot of Titus Oates, and the unprincipled conduct of Shaftesbury, Bedloe, and others, who spent their whole energies in forging the most wicked stories and inventing the most false alarms in order to excite the people against our most holy faith, and all who professed it. Neither shall I here detail the trials of those priests and laymen who, during the remainder of this reign, were sentenced to death, and executed in the most barbarous manner, on account of their religion. These things belong to a perfect history, rather than to a hurried sketch such as we are now professing to give.

King James II. was a Catholic when he came to the throne; but the nation was Protestant to the very last degree, and he had not the power to do much in favour of his religion. He was anxious to procure relief for Catholics by proclaiming liberty of conscience and freedom of worship to all denominations; but, as usual, the National Church threw her vote into the opposite scale, and all who *did not conform* to the idol which had been set up were *persecuted and punished*. By and by the king was for

to quit the kingdom; and this Protestant nation, in their zeal against the Catholic faith, solemnly set aside King James and his youthful son, and chose a Dutchman, William of Orange, and his wife Mary, to be king and queen in their stead.

The Dutch invader had been brought up in the strictest reformed principles. He was a thorough Protestant, according to the school of Calvin and Knox. Of course he did not at heart like the bishops and the Prayer-book of the Church of England much more than he liked the Catholic faith; but he was keen enough to see that the Protestant establishment was a national concern, and that as long as he was supreme head of this National Church, he could mould it and fashion it as he pleased. Accordingly he set to work in repealing the laws against Protestant Nonconformists; and took an oath at his coronation, "to the utmost of his power to maintain the laws of God, the true Protestant profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law." And well he kept his word. For though many acts were passed by him for the benefit of other dissenters from the Established Church, there was none which was not directed towards the infliction of some new injury on Catholics. By an act passed in the first year of his reign, another and more stringent oath of supremacy and allegiance was ordered to be taken under the same penalties as before; and all persons were required, on the oath being tendered to them by a justice of the peace, to declare that they owned the king as their only spiritual head, under the penalty of being punished as Popish recusants. Exposed as the Catholics were to continual attacks, they were forbidden to have arms or ammunition, and their houses might be searched, and any thing they had there seized. They were not even allowed to have a horse of above the value of 5*l.* (!); any one might stop a Catholic and compel him to take that sum for the animal he rode, whatever might be its real worth; and by the so-called Bill of Rights, it was declared that Papists, and persons marrying Papists, are for ever shut out from the throne of England, and the crown shall go to the next Protestant heir. It was decreed that all sergeants and com-

sellors-at-law, barristers, advocates, attorneys, solicitors, proctors, or clerks, practising in the courts without having taken the oaths to William and Mary should suffer the penalties of a *præmunire*. Lieutenants of English counties were empowered to quarter on the estates of Catholics such horse and foot soldiers as they might choose to appoint. "The private exercise of the Catholic religion was punished with enormous penalties. The prelates and pastors of that religion were delivered over to . . . ruffians licensed by law to hunt them out like wild beasts, and amply rewarded for the successful chase." If any one apprehended a bishop or priest saying Mass, he was entitled to the reward of 100*l*. A penalty of the same amount was inflicted on any one who sent his child beyond the sea without a license; and all Catholics above eighteen years of age who did not subscribe to the declaration were disqualified from inheriting any lands, and forced to hand them over to the next Protestant heir. This infamous law left to Catholic parents nothing but personal property, together with the heritage of their most holy faith, to bequeath to their children; it rent asunder the bonds of affection between parent and child, and sowed distrust in the bosom of every Catholic family throughout the land; for it enabled the son of any Catholic, by turning Protestant, at once to dispossess his father, and so to reduce him to beggary!

Such was the fate and condition of our Catholic forefathers under William III., that "champion of civil and religious liberty," whose wicked conduct towards his unhappy father-in-law, Englishmen have been taught from their cradles to adore as the means by which "the glorious Revolution" was effected.

Under Anne, further measures against Catholics were thought necessary in order to secure the Establishment, though by this time the numbers of this formidable body were reduced to little more than 13,000 in the whole of England and Wales, and amounted only to 186th part of the entire population; and yet for the further security of "the Protestant religion" new measures of severity were required. Catholics were not to be allowed to purchase la

in Ireland ; new encouragement was given to discoverers of Popish lands and trusts, even in England ; and the Scotch authorities were empowered to punish Jesuits "and other trafficking Papists." Though several laws were passed for the benefit of Dissenters, yet Papists were specially excluded from all concern in them. When George I. ascended the Protestant throne, there was a rival claimant in the person of the son of James II. In order to crush his hopes, fresh oaths of abjuration were imposed under the usual penalties. Every Catholic soldier who enlisted without declaring himself to be a Papist was to be punished by court-martial. And though the Catholics were already burdened by paying double land-tax, he ordered 100,000*l.* to be assessed on Papists above 18 years old, in order to pay the expenses of putting down the rebellion in Scotland. His successor, George II., though he gave his assent to a law which suffered Jews to be naturalised in England without receiving the Sacrament in a Protestant church, yet could not allow any toleration to be extended to English Catholics.

George III. came to the throne in 1760, and many of my readers may remember him well. Though naturally he was of a kind and gentle nature, yet the first part of his reign was marked only by the passing of fresh penal laws against the Catholic faith. Catholics were prohibited from serving in the militia ; and were still made to pay a double land-tax. In the year 1769, a priest, James Talbot, brother of the (then) Earl of Shrewsbury, was tried for his life as a felon at the Old Bailey for saying Mass, and was acquitted only for want of evidence. One single house of lawyers in London, it is said, defended more than twenty priests under such prosecutions about that time. Even so late as 1782, Catholic labourers and others were fined and suffered the loss of their goods and chattels for not attending the services of the Protestant Established Church.

It was an act of tardy justice, when, eight years after the "*No Popery*" riot of Lord George Gordon, that is in 1780, Sir R. Saville obtained from Parliament a repeal of certain laws of the reign of William and Anne, which forbade Catholics to keep a school, or to buy or inherit lands. The Toleration Act, passed in 1791, exempted Catholics from

being forced to go to church, as well as from the fines for hearing or saying Mass, or for being a priest or deacon, or belonging to a religious order. They were henceforth protected in the free exercise of their religion, and places of worship were allowed to them, if duly registered at the quarter-sessions; barristers were relieved from taking the oaths appointed under William and Mary; all Catholics were released from the oath of supremacy, and no longer debarred from residing in London; and finally Catholic peers were allowed once more to appear in the presence of their sovereign. It was not, however, till 1829 that Catholics gained admission to Parliament, to offices under government, and to corporate bodies. It was not till that time that Catholics could endow any school or college for the education of their children in their most holy faith. Till that time Catholic soldiers were compelled to go to Protestant worship, under a penalty; and for a second offence they were put into irons. I am credibly informed that so late as 1841, Catholic sailors on board of British men-of-war were forced to attend Protestant service every Sunday; and I am afraid that individual instances of oppression of a similar kind are still by no means uncommon. With these, however, I am not now concerned, for I write not for the sake of rousing angry feelings in the minds of Catholics, by dwelling on our past or present grievances, but for the sake of supplying to Protestants food for very serious reflection; for the sake of suggesting to them that they should make a more diligent and impartial inquiry into the history of what is past, in order that they may be led to a more true appreciation of what is present.

It is right that men who have been brought up from their infancy to believe that the Reformation was a noble and glorious event—the spontaneous up-rising of a people unwilling any longer to be the slaves of darkness and error,—that Protestantism was gladly and joyfully embraced by the people of England as the pure religion of the gospel, and that the liberties which they now enjoy as men and citizens have been the natural and necessary growth of that Protestantism;—it is right, I say, that persons who have been taught to believe all this should consider well the fact

that are contained in these few pages, and see what are the conclusions to which they lead. The nation abandoned its ancient faith and proposed to embrace "another gospel;" is it therefore *quite* certain that they had discovered the ancient faith to be false? had the new gospel nothing to recommend it besides itself? Or look again on the other side of the picture,—and this is the main point to which I would direct your attention. You have read in these pages of a number of penal laws, some of them of the most extreme severity, and *all* vexatious and harassing to a very considerable degree, which were passed by the Parliament of this country, and faithfully put into execution by the magistrates and courts of justice—with what intent? to destroy Popery in England. *Have they succeeded?* Is not the Catholic faith gaining ground every day, not only among the poor and ignorant, but also among the very flower of England's intelligence and goodness? Could a merely human faith have survived three centuries of persecution, such as I have been describing to you? If the Catholic Church be in very truth the thing you take her to be, a monstrous compound of error and of crime, is it not strange that she should have "to be killed so often, and the life so often to be trodden out of her, . . . and such persecuting Acts to be passed in Parliament, in order thoroughly, and on for all, and for the very last time, and for ever and ever, annihilate her once more?" Is not this, I say, a most strange phenomenon? and how shall we account for "One in the council rising up, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, respected by all the people, said, men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend as touching these men," (he is speaking of the blessed apostles, Peter and John); . . . "I say to you, re from them and let them alone; for if this counsel or work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God cannot overthrow it" (Acts v. 34-38).

LONDON

PRINTED BY ROBSON, LEVEY, AND FRANKLIN,
Great New Street, Fetter Lane.

Library of Christian Doctrine.

**WHY DON'T YOU KEEP HOLY THE
SABBATH-DAY?**

A QUESTION FOR ALL BIBLE CHRISTIANS.



By Permission.

LONDON:
BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.
READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

1852.

[Price

Why don't you keep holy the Sabbath-day?

I AM going to propose a very plain and serious question, to which I would entreat all who profess to follow "the Bible and the Bible only" to give their most earnest attention. It is this: Why do you not keep holy the Sabbath-day?

The command of Almighty God stands clearly written in the Bible in these words: "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work" (Exod. xx. 8-19). And again, "Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord; whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath-day" (Exod. xxxv. 2, 3). How strict and precise is God's commandment upon this head! No work whatever was to be done on the day which He had chosen to set apart for Himself and to make holy; He required of His people that they should not even light a fire upon that day. And accordingly, when the children of Israel "found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath-day," "the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp" (Numbers xv. 35). Such being God's command then, I ask again, Why do you not obey it? Why do you not keep holy the Sabbath-day?

You will answer me, perhaps, that you do keep holy the Sabbath-day; for that you abstain from all worldly business, and diligently go to church, and say your prayers, and read your Bible at home, every Sunday of your lives.

WHY DON'T YOU KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH-DAY?

But *Sunday is not the Sabbath-day*. Sunday is the *first* day of the week; the Sabbath-day was the *seventh* day of the week. Almighty God did not give a commandment that men should keep holy *one day in seven*; but He named His own day, and said distinctly, "Thou shalt keep holy *the seventh day*;" and He assigned a reason for choosing this day rather than any other—a reason which belongs only to the seventh day of the week, and cannot be applied to the rest. He says, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; *wherefore* the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." Almighty God ordered that all men should rest from their labour on the seventh day, because He too had rested on that day: He did not rest on Sunday, but on Saturday. On Sunday, which is the first day of the week, He *began* the work of creation, He did not finish it; it was on Saturday that He "*ended* His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made; and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made" (Gen. ii. 2, 3). Nothing can be more plain and easy to understand than all this; and there is nobody who attempts to deny it; it is acknowledged by every body that the day which Almighty God appointed to be kept holy was Saturday, not Sunday. Why then do you keep holy the Sunday, and not Saturday?

You will tell me that Saturday was the *Jewish Sabbath*, and that the *Christian Sabbath* has been changed to Sunday. Changed! but by whom? Who has authority to change an express commandment of Almighty God? When God has spoken and said, Thou shalt keep holy the seventh day, who will dare to say, Nay, thou mayest work and do all manner of worldly business on the seventh day; but thou shalt keep holy the first day in its stead? This is a most important question, which I know not how you can answer.

You are a Protestant, and you profess to go by the Bible and the Bible only; and yet in so important a matter the observance of one day in seven as a holy day, you go against the plain letter of the Bible, and put an *other day* in the place of that day which the Bible has com-

manded. The command to keep holy the seventh day is one of the ten commandments; you believe that the other nine are still binding; who gave you authority to tamper with the fourth? If you are consistent with your own principles, if you really follow the Bible and the Bible only, you ought to be able to produce some portion of the New Testament in which this fourth commandment is expressly altered, or at least from which you may confidently infer that it was the will of God that Christians should make that change in its observance which you have made. Let us see whether any such passages can be found. I will look for them in the writings of your own champions, who have attempted to defend your practice in this matter.

1. The first text which I find quoted upon the subject is this: "Let no man judge you in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days" (Col. ii. 16). I could understand a Bible Christian arguing from this passage, that we ought to make no difference between Saturday, Sunday, and every other day of the week; that under the Christian dispensation all such distinctions of days were done away with; one day was as good and as holy as another; there were to be no Sabbaths, no holy days at all. But not one syllable does it say about the obligation of the Sabbath being *transferred* from one day to another.

2. Secondly, the words of St. John are quoted, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Apoc. i. 10). Is it possible that any body can for a moment imagine that here is a safe and clear rule for changing the weekly feast from the seventh to the first day? This passage is utterly silent upon such a subject; it does but give us scriptural authority for calling some one day in particular (it does not even say *which* day) "the Lord's day."

3. Next we are reminded that St. Paul bade his Corinthian converts, "upon the first day of the week, lay by them in store, that there might be no gatherings" when *he himself came* (1 Cor. xvi. 2). How is this supposed to affect the law of the Jewish Sabbath? It commands a *certain act of almsgiving* to be done on the first day of the week. It says absolutely nothing about not doing certain other acts of prayer and public worship on the seventh day

4. But it was "on the first day of the week" when the disciples were assembled with closed doors for fear of the Jews, and Jesus stood in the midst of them; and again, it was eight days afterwards (that is, on the first day of the following week) that "the disciples were within, and Thomas with them," and Jesus again came and stood in the midst (John xx. 19, 26): that is to say, it was on the evening of the day of the Resurrection that our Lord first shewed Himself to many disciples gathered together; and after eight days He again shewed Himself to the same company, with the further addition of St. Thomas. What is there in these facts to do away with the obligation of keeping holy the seventh day? Our Lord rose from the dead on the first day of the week, and on the same day at evening He appears to many of His disciples; He appears again on that day week, and perhaps also on other days in the interval. Let Protestants, if they will, keep holy the first day of the week in grateful commemoration of that stupendous mystery, the Resurrection of Christ, and of the evidences which He vouchsafed to give of it to His doubting disciples; but this is no scriptural authority for ceasing to keep holy another day of the week which God had expressly commanded to be kept holy for another and altogether different reason.

5. But lastly, we have the example of the Apostles themselves. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts xx. 7). Here we have clear proof that the disciples came together for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and that they heard a sermon on a Sunday. But is there any proof that they had not done the same on the Saturday also? Is it not expressly written concerning those early Christians, that they "continued *daily* with one accord in the temple, breaking bread from house to house?" (Acts ii. 46.) And as a matter of fact, do we not know from other sources that, in many parts of the Church, the ancient Christians were in the habit of meeting together for public worship, to receive Holy Communion, and to perform the other offices, on Saturdays just the same as on Sundays? Again, then, I say, let Protestants keep holy, if it

will, the first day of the week, in order that they may resemble those Christians who were gathered together on that day in an upper chamber in Troas ; but let them remember that this cannot possibly release them from the obligation of keeping holy *another* day which Almighty God has ordered to be kept holy, because on that day He "rested from all His work."

I do not know of any other passages of holy Scripture which Protestants are in the habit of quoting to defend their practice of keeping holy the first day of the week instead of the seventh ; yet surely those which I have quoted are not such as should satisfy any reasonable man, who looks upon the written word of God as *they* profess to look upon it, namely, as the *one only* appointed means of learning God's will, and who really desires to learn and to obey that will in all things with humbleness and simplicity of heart. It is absolutely impossible that a reasonable and thoughtful person should be satisfied, by the texts that I have quoted, that Almighty God intended the obligation of Saturday under the old law to be transferred to Sunday under the new. And yet Protestants *do* so transfer it, and never seem to have the slightest misgivings lest, in doing so, they should be guilty of breaking one of God's commandments. Why is this ? Because, although they talk so largely about following the Bible and the Bible only, they are really guided in this matter by the voice of tradition. Yes, much as they may hate and denounce the word, they have in fact no other authority to allege for this most important change. The present generation of Protestants keep Sunday holy instead of Saturday, because they received it as part of the Christian religion from the last generation, and that generation received it from the generation before, and so on backwards from one generation to another, by a continual succession, until we come to the time of the (so-called) Reformation, *when it so happened* that those who conducted the change of religion in this country left this particular portion of Catholic faith and practice untouched.

But, had it happened otherwise,—had some one or other of the "Reformers" taken it into his head to denounce the

observance of Sunday as a Popish corruption and superstition, and to insist upon it that Saturday was the day which God had appointed to be kept holy, and that He had never authorised the observance of any other,—all Protestants would have been obliged, in obedience to their professed principle of following the Bible and the Bible only, either to acknowledge this teaching as true, and to return to the observance of the ancient Jewish Sabbath, or else to deny that there is any Sabbath at all. And so, in like manner, any one at the present day who should set about, honestly and without prejudice, to draw up for himself a form of religious belief and practice out of the written Word of God, must needs come to the same conclusion: he must either believe that the Jewish Sabbath is still binding upon men's consciences, because of the Divine command, "Thou shalt keep holy the seventh day;" or he must believe that no Sabbath at all is binding upon them, because of the Apostolic injunction, "Let no man judge you in respect of a festival day, or of the Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ's." Either one or the other of these conclusions he might honestly come to; but he would know nothing whatever of a *Christian* Sabbath distinct from the Jewish, celebrated on a different day, and observed in a different manner, simply because holy Scripture itself nowhere speaks of such a thing.

Now, mind, in all this you would greatly misunderstand me if you supposed I was quarrelling with you for acting in this matter on a true and right principle, in other words, a Catholic principle; viz. the acceptance, without hesitation, of that which has been handed down to you by an unbroken tradition. I would not tear from you a single one of those shreds and fragments of Divine truth which you have retained. God forbid! They are the most precious things you possess, and by God's blessing may serve as clues to bring you out of that labyrinth of error in which you find yourselves involved, far more by the fault of your forefathers three centuries ago than by your own. What I do *quarrel with you for* is, not your inconsistency in occasionally acting on a true principle, but your adoption, as *general rule*, of a false one. You keep the Sunday, and

the Saturday; and you do so rightly, for this was the practice of all Christians when Protestantism began; but you have abandoned other Catholic observances which were equally universal at that day, preferring the novelties introduced by the men who invented Protestantism, to the unvarying tradition of above 1500 years. We blame you not for making Sunday your weekly holy-day instead of Saturday, but for rejecting tradition, which is the only safe and clear rule by which this observance can be justified. In outward act we do the same as yourselves in this matter; we too no longer observe the Jewish Sabbath, but Sunday in its stead; but then there is this important difference between us, that we do not pretend, as you do, to derive our authority for so doing from *a book*, but we derive it from *a living teacher*, and that teacher is the Church. Moreover, we believe that not every thing which God would have us to know and to do is written in the Bible, but that there is also an *unwritten* word of God, which we are bound to believe and to obey, just as we believe and obey the Bible itself, according to that saying of the Apostle, "Stand fast and hold the traditions which you have learned, *whether by word or by our epistle*" (2 Thess. ii. 14). We Catholics, then, have precisely the same authority for keeping Sunday holy instead of Saturday as we have for every other article of our creed, namely, the authority of "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15); whereas you who are Protestants have really no authority for it whatever; for there *is* no authority for it in the Bible, and you will not allow that there *can be* authority for it any where else. Both you and we do, in fact, follow tradition in this matter; but *we* follow it, believing it to be a part of God's word, and the Church to be its divinely-appointed guardian and interpreter; *you* follow it, denouncing it all the time as a fallible and treacherous guide, which often "makes the commandment of God of none effect."

Historical Library.

QUEEN ELIZABETH AND HER PEOPLE.

II.

WHY DID THE POPE EXCOMMUNICATE QUEEN ELIZABETH?



By Permission.

LONDON:
BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.
READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

Why did the Pope excommunicate Queen Elizabeth?

DID the Pope excommunicate Queen Elizabeth? He did. Did he declare her deposed from the throne of England, and release her subjects from their allegiance? He did; and in my present Number I shall tell you the reason why. I may observe, by the way, that I am not bound as a Catholic to justify his conduct. That the Pope possesses the power of deposing temporal sovereigns, or that he exercised it rightly or prudently in this particular case, is no part of the Catholic faith; and there have been Catholic writers who denied both the one and the other. But nevertheless I engage to shew you that this exercise of authority, irreconcilable as it may appear with modern ideas, was not only in accordance with the received maxims of that age, but in no way opposed to those principles of civil liberty which have received the highest sanction in this land.

There is nothing like making our opponent's case our own: it renders us remarkably clear-sighted as to the justice of his cause. Let us, then, suppose a state of things in this country like the following:

Let us suppose that from time immemorial the English nation (as well as Europe in general) had been Protestant, and Protestant only. This supposition certainly requires a wide stretch of imagination, but it is necessary in order to make my parallel complete. At length (let us imagine) a religious revolution takes place among the nations, and a tyrannical king arises in England, who, without making any positive changes in other respects, takes to himself the supreme authority in spiritual things over all persons in *the realm*; puts himself in the place of those who have been regarded by the people as the heads of their religion; *and makes it treason to deny his pretensions, or to refuse submission to his usurped dominion.* At his death he is

succeeded by his son, who, by means of an arbitrary government, pushes still further the changes which his father had commenced. He introduces new-fangled doctrines from abroad, and tolerates no other. He reigns, let us suppose, but seven years, and at his death the ancient order of things is restored: a Protestant queen ascends the throne; Protestant institutions revive; Protestant principles again prevail; the old laws and usages resume their sway; the old religious leaders take their accustomed places, and England is once more a Protestant country. The government carry things with a strong hand: Popery, or whatever you may please to call the usurping power,—for remember the whole history is merely imaginary,—is put down, and Protestant ascendancy is re-established in Church and State. This state of things does not last long: the Protestant queen dies after a reign of only five years, and her Popish sister mounts the throne,—Popish, that is, in heart and in design, for while her sister was in power she professed herself a Protestant. She is not the rightful heir to the crown, being but the illegitimate daughter of the tyrannical king of whom I spoke; but for political reasons the legitimate heir is unpopular among all classes, and her opponent's title is acknowledged without opposition.

Well, having supposed so much, let us suppose a little more: the new queen dissembles for a while; she feels her way; she proceeds softly and stealthily; she tries the strength and dispositions of the opposite party; but after a few weeks' maturing of her plans, finding a spirit of indifference abroad and her Popish adherents resolute and ready, she avows herself what secretly she had always been, a Papist. Popery comes in like a flood. The Popish refugees, who during the former reign had been plotting and breeding rebellion against this crown and realm, return from exile and are loaded with favours by the court. The old staunch supporters of the Protestant cause are ejected from all posts of authority or trust, and "bigoted Papists" occupy their places. False-hearted Protestants shew themselves in their true colours, betray their religion, or by their tame submission encourage the evil intentions of the government.

The queen takes the usual coronation-oath to support the Protestant religion as by law established ; but it is with a mental reservation, which leaves her free, as she imagines, to construe it in a sense which it never bore before, and which is the very contrary of that in which the people understand the words she uses. Even before she takes it she has violated it, not only in intention but in deed ; for she had contrived a plot in conjunction with a few secret advisers, by which a great and heavy blow is to be dealt against the Protestant religion, and Popery raised to sovereign power. A servile parliament executes her will, the Papal supremacy is proclaimed, and every holder of office or aspirant thereto, whether in Church or State, must take the oath, or forfeit all hope of honours or emoluments ; nay, it is enforced with the highest penalties of the law, and life-long imprisonment and death are the punishments awarded for non-conforming. No class of subjects, except that of the highest nobles, is exempted : pastors and people must take the oath if tended to them, or, by the terms of the law, die the death of traitors.

We will complete this fabulous history by supposing the Protestant people of this country forced to be present at Popish worship. Dragged to their own old churches, now occupied by Popish priests, they are compelled to witness rites which they abhor, and to hear sermons reviling their own belief, or inculcating doctrines which are strange and odious to them. To refuse attendance is to be fined ; to worship after their own manner, and as their forefathers had worshipped, is to bring themselves under the power of a law which dooms them to "obscene and horrible mutilation." They who believe and love their religion are forced to betake themselves to secret chambers and desert places, where, hidden from the eyes of men, they may worship with their fellows, listen to the word of God, or partake of such religious rites as they or their children may require. Their *life is spent in continual fear ; for they know that it is in the power of false friends, treacherous domestics, or any common informer, to tear them from the bosom of their families, ruin them in their fortunes, cast them into prison, or hurry them to the scaffold and the ripping-knife.*

I have put an imaginary case of a Popish sovereign persecuting her Protestant subjects ; a case, however, which you know very well finds its exact counterpart in the conduct of Elizabeth towards the Catholics of this country. For "Popish" read "Protestant," and *vice versa*, and you will have a pretty accurate description of the condition of English Catholics during the first ten years of Elizabeth's rule. Up to the middle of Henry's reign England had been from time immemorial a Catholic country ; and it was not till the accession of Edward that Protestant doctrines were spread among the people. All the ancient traditions, customs, laws and liberties, successes and glories of the nation were bound up with the Catholic religion. From time immemorial the Pope, as successor of the Apostle Peter, had been held to be the head of the great Christian commonwealth, and as such was acknowledged and honoured in England. Protestantism was a new thing in the land ; it was a revolt against the highest moral and religious authority in the world ; it was opposed to all the cherished associations of the people. They felt, as they had every right to feel, that no earthly power was justified in depriving them of what was their dearest and most valued heritage. Their faith was not only a possession, it was a portion of their life, of themselves. To force them not to hear Mass, or frequent the Sacraments, was to rob them, as they knew, of the precious fruits of Christ's blood-shedding, and to subject them to the deepest misery of which the human soul is capable. England had ever been their Catholic home ; and what were kings or queens, that they should ravage and lay it waste ? Why were they to be shut out, not only from their beloved churches, which the piety of their fathers had built and adorned, and which were theirs by every title human and divine, but even from those sacred and adorable mysteries, without which their churches were but as the tombs of the dead ? Yet this is what Elizabeth was bent on doing.

How she commenced the evil work I have shewn you in my last Number : to draw out the parallel at length would be only to repeat what I have already said. That the picture I gave you in my imaginary history is not in the le

overdrawn, I will prove to you from Protestant authors. Elizabeth was recognised by the nation, if not as a Catholic sovereign, yet as one prepared to protect the Catholic religion. She "dissimulated," as her Protestant biographer says, "for the first six weeks of her reign;" and at her coronation—a fact never to be forgotten—she took the oath which had been taken by all Catholic sovereigns. Thus having got the reins of government into her hands, and collected her friends about her, she proceeded to suppress the very religion which she had sworn to defend, and to persecute its faithful professors, though, far from disputing her title, they were even forward in maintaining it. It is acknowledged by all historians that up to the year 1563, when parliament passed new and more stringent laws against the Catholics, the latter had done nothing to exasperate the government or disturb the peace of the State. Whatever dissatisfaction they felt—and I do not see how Protestants should expect them to be contented with the sort of legislation adopted against them—strange to say, they had committed no overt acts of disaffection. Hallam says, that "partly through political circumstances, but *far more from the hard usage they experienced for professing their religion*, there seems to have been an increasing restlessness among the Catholics about 1562;" he also expresses his "thorough conviction that the *persecution*, for it can obtain no better name, carried on against the English Catholics, however it might seem to delude the government by producing an apparent conformity, could not but excite a spirit of disloyalty in many adherents of the faith." Such, he conceives, was but the natural result of oppression; but in a passage quoted in my last, he declares that the Catholics "had as yet given no further provocation than that of pertinaciously continuing to believe and worship as their fathers had done before them." Sir James Mackintosh likewise says, that "the first ten years of Elizabeth's domestic administration were a season of undisturbed quiet."

This fact, of course, makes the case only so much the worse against Elizabeth and the Protestant party. The five years of Mary's reign were far from being a season of quiet. More than one rebellion menaced her throne; the Protest-

ants kept the government in a continual state of alarm, and in a manner provoked it to acts of sanguinary vengeance. Elizabeth went much more deliberately to work: she had laws enacted *in terrorem*, put them in force so far as it was discreet so to do, or reserved them for use at a more convenient season. It was thus she acted in regard to the statute passed in the first year of her reign. "The law which rendered it penal to hear Mass," says the Protestant historian, Miss Aikin, "was first put in force against several persons of rank, that the example might strike the more terror." She then mentions the cases of Sir E. Waldegrave and Lord Loughborough, and adds that, against the former, "it is to be feared much cruelty was exercised during his imprisonment; for it is said to have occasioned his death, which occurred in the Tower a few months afterwards. The High Commission Court now began to take cognisance of what was called recusancy; it also encouraged information against such as refrained from joining in the established worship; and numerous professors of the old religion, both ecclesiastics and laity, were summoned on one account or other before this tribunal. Of these some were committed to prison; others restricted from entering certain places, as the two universities, or circumscribed within the limits of some town or county; and most were bound in great penalties to be forthcoming whenever it should be required." Mackintosh also, after citing the same instances, says, "When such facts are still extant and accessible, it is certain that the madness of fanaticism, and the officious servility of petty tyrants in many cases unknown to us, must have employed bad laws for objects beyond their detestable purpose." He doubts whether in these early times the "persecution extended to capital punishment, or comprehended very numerous victims;" nor do I mean to assert that such was the case; all I wish you to see is that the murderous engine stood ready for use, and that it required only a word or a sign to set it in motion. As I said in my last, no one pretends that Elizabeth and her government were anxious to execute the barbarous laws *they had enacted*; in other words (as Dr. Lingard expresses it), to "drench the scaffolds in every part of the kingdom."

with the blood" of British subjects. "The queen" (he thinks) "was appalled at the prospect before her," as well indeed she might be; "she communicated her sentiments to the metropolitan; and that prelate, by a circular but secret letter, admonished the bishops, who had been appointed to administer the oath," and who were disposed to shew no mercy, "to proceed with lenity and caution, and never to make a second tender," (refusal in such case involving nothing less than death as its penalty,) "till they had acquainted him with the circumstances of the case, and had received his answer. Thus, by the humanity or policy of Elizabeth, were the Catholics allowed to breathe from their terrors; but *the sword was still suspended over their heads by a single hair*, which she could break at her pleasure, whenever she might be instigated by the suggestions of their enemies, or provoked by the real or imputed misconduct of individuals of their communion." This breathing time, however, was far from being one of rest or freedom from alarms. A writer in the *Pictorial History of England*, commenting on the statute which forbade the using of any but the established liturgy, and imposed a fine of 1s. on all who absented themselves from the Protestant church, says, "By this act the Catholic rites, however privately celebrated, were interdicted, and priests and monks who said mass and prayed in the old fashion, had a mark set upon them to be hunted like wild beasts. In some respects, where it was not deemed expedient to irritate persons of very high rank, the government connived at the secret or domestic exercise of the Roman religion; but *such cases were rare even in the early part of Elizabeth's reign*, and the restored Protestant clergy, who had learned no toleration from their own sufferings, propelled the agents of government into the paths of persecution—a persecution not fiery, hot, and bloody, like that of the late reign, but petty, minute, destructive of individual liberty, household independence, domestic peace, and too often of property." Hallam also thus describes the condition of the Catholics at this time. Their clergy, *he says*, were obliged to "travel the country in various disguises. By stealth, at the dead of night, in privet

chambers, in the secret lurking-places of an ill-peopled country, with all the mystery that subdues the imagination, with all the mutual trust that invigorates constancy, these proscribed ecclesiastics celebrated their solemn rites, more impressive in their concealment than if surrounded by all their former splendour."

Now I ask you, would "Englishmen and Protestants" have submitted to treatment such as this? You know they would not: then why should Englishmen and Catholics? You know that Protestants would not have submitted, for they did not submit in Mary's reign; so far from submitting, they resisted and rebelled, and justified their rebellion by the most immoral doctrines.* The Protestants of that day not only deemed it right to take up arms against their sovereign in defence of their religious opinions, but declared it to be a sin to obey "ungodly"—by which they meant Catholic—princes, and an act most pleasing to Heaven to put them to a violent death. This was the common language of all the pretended reformers; and it would not be difficult to shew that more sovereign princes were dispossessed of the whole or a part of their dominions by their Protestant subjects within the first century after the great defection from the Church, than were deposed by Pope or Papists either before or since. In France, Flanders, and Scotland, the insurgents were encouraged by Elizabeth herself, who secretly assisted them both with men and money, while openly she professed to be at peace with the respective governments. Again, therefore, I ask, if Protestants may rightly do such things, why not Catholics also? Why may not Catholics take arms in defence of their religious liberties, or to avert the impending blow of persecution?

From the several passages which I have brought together from Protestant sources, you may be able to form some conception of the state to which the Catholics of this country were reduced by a Protestant queen and government; and I think you must be struck with wonder that, *in spite of all the provocation they received, the horrible laws by which they were threatened, and the harass-*

* See No. 7, The Smithfield Fires, pp. 4-6.

measures that were adopted against both their religion and their persons, they refrained from asserting their rights by force of arms. The persecution, though it occasionally paused, never really ceased ; Protestantism, having its enemy by the throat, never for an instant relaxed its hold, but from time to time made its pressure felt by the infliction of fresh indignities. Thus, "in 1568," says Mackintosh, "a notable mark of the queen's displeasure was fixed on the ancient religion by the exclusion of Catholics from court. Shortly after, they were excluded from the bar, by an order in council, which directed the benchers or governors of the inns of court, the places of legal education, to enforce the oath of supremacy upon all candidates for the bar or the bench." "In 1569," says Hallam, "a profession of conformity was required from all justices of the peace, which some refused, and others made against their consciences." Elizabeth never relented ; so far from tolerating or conniving at the Catholic religion even in its most private exercise, she had made up her mind to root it out of the land ; and the only question with her was, what means would most effectually accomplish her purpose. The Catholics saw plainly that they lived only on sufferance ; that the destruction of their religion was resolved upon ; and that that destruction, if needs be, would be brought about by their political annihilation, if not personal ruin. They had patiently endured ten long years of unrelieved oppression, and all for what ? for nothing else than refusing to abandon the ancient faith of Christendom, and to accept a new creed at the dictation of a dominant party in this island ! If ever resistance to a tyrannical government be justifiable, it had become so now in England ; and the Protestants of this country, be they of what denomination they may, are bound by their own principles to acknowledge that, if Catholics rose in arms against Elizabeth, they had right and justice on their side, or at least that they did nothing but what they would themselves have done under similar circumstances.

This fact established, I will shortly notice two or three events which immediately preceded the issuing of the famous bull of excommunication. On the 16th of May, 1568, Mary

Queen of Scots (who by direct descent was the rightful heir to the throne), after a disastrous battle, in which her forces were defeated by certain rebel lords, who, with the secret encouragement of Elizabeth, had revolted against their sovereign, took the fatal resolution of throwing herself on the protection of her sister queen. She sent her the diamond heart which Elizabeth had formerly given her as a token of friendship and good faith, and without waiting for a reply, landed on the English shore. Elizabeth redeemed her pledge and repaid the confidence of Mary by making her her prisoner; and not content with this, she sought to get James also, Mary's infant son, into her power, that thus she might hold in her hands every living being that stood in immediate proximity to the throne. This step proved in the end as injurious to her own peace as it was unjust towards her victim. At the close of the year 1569 a plot was detected which had for its object the release of Mary from prison, and her marriage with the *Protestant* Duke of Norfolk. No harm was intended to the person or the government of Elizabeth; but on its discovery Norfolk was committed to the Tower. His imprisonment was soon followed by a formidable insurrection on the part of the old Catholic nobility and gentry in the north, at the head of which were the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland. Its object seems to have been, not the dethronement of Elizabeth, but the obtaining a declaration on her part that the Queen of Scots was next heir to the throne. In their proclamations the insurgents called on all true Englishmen to join with them in restoring the crown, the nobility, and the worship of God to their former estate; and declared among other things that what they desired was "to obtain liberty for their consciences, and to settle true religion on such foundations as might supersede the interference of foreign princes." On their banner was depicted the Sacred Body of Christ with the five precious wounds; and it was borne before them by a venerable old man of the name of Norton, who with his five sons had devoted himself to the rescue of the Catholic religion. On reaching Durham they "purified the cathedral," as Macintosh expresses it, "by burning the heretical (and in th

opinion, unfaithful) versions of the Bible, and the books of public devotion which had been profaned by heretics." But though the rebellion was certainly headed by Catholics, and one of its objects was the restoration of the Catholic religion, yet great numbers of them joined the royal forces. I give no credit to them for so doing; I simply state the fact as one of which Protestants ought to take account. Camden asserts that, instead of responding to the appeal of the insurgents, the Catholics "for the most part handed over the letters they had received, and even the bearers of them, into the queen's hands. In all parts of the country they vied with each other in offering their fortunes and their services in aid against the rebels; so that, beholding the singular fidelity of her subjects, she returned most grateful thanks to the Divine mercy." The attempt was soon crushed, and terrible was Elizabeth's vengeance on the rebels. Her biographer tells us, that "besides executing such of the leaders as fell into her hands, she compelled her victorious general to deluge the northern counties with the blood of the simple unreflecting peasants, who had been induced to join the revolt. Learned research," she says, "has brought to light some hideous facts;" and she adds, "staunch indeed must be the admirers of 'Good Queen Bess,' who can calmly peruse the order which, *by special commandment of the queen,*" the Earl of Sussex addressed to the chief officer in command, Sir George Bowes, and in which he set down the numbers to be put to death in every town; with a special proviso, however, that he was not to execute any that had freeholds or were noted wealthy, "for so is the Queen's Majesty's pleasure;" the said Queen's Majesty having determined to reserve such as possessed lands or chattels for trial in the courts of law, that so their forfeitures might furnish her with funds to discharge the expenses of the campaign, and remunerate her adherents. The number of those who were thus attainted was fifty-seven; but of the country people *every fifth man* was marked for execution in *Sussex's book*. Cecil also had advised that a few inhabitants of each township should be apprehended and compelled by imprisonment, and, "if need should, by lack of food, to disclose the names of those among their neighbours

who had joined the rebels." "The fearful order being tardily executed," proceeds Miss Strickland, "Sussex wrote to spur on the reluctant ministers of the royal vengeance," telling his correspondent that "the Queen's Majesty doth much marvel that she doth not hear from me that the execution is yet ended," and expressing a fear that "this lingering will breed displeasure to us both." Nay, not content with this, Elizabeth sent her general with a military force to burn and lay waste nearly three hundred villages in the border counties of Scotland, because Mary's subjects had, as she said, encouraged the rebels in the north of England. Such was the justice tempered with mercy for which the name of Elizabeth has been graced with the title of "good." "In the end the richer sort purchased their lives, but no less than eight hundred of the working classes perished by the hands of the executioner!" "In the county of Durham alone," writes Dr. Lingard, "more than three hundred individuals suffered death" (the old man Norton and his sons among the number);—"nor was there between Newcastle and Wetherby (a district of sixty miles in length and forty in breadth) a town or village in which some of the inhabitants did not expire on the gibbet as a warning to their fellows. The survivors were at length pardoned, but *on condition* that they should take not only the oath of allegiance, but also that of *supremacy*." That is to say—and I beg your particular attention to the fact—it was a hanging matter to refuse to swear that the queen was head of the Church. The poor Catholic had to choose between losing his life or damning his soul.

Not long after this Elizabeth published a declaration, intended to conciliate the people, in which she graciously announced that she would "make no inquiry into the consciences of her subjects, *provided they observed her laws by coming to common prayer*:" in other words, as a writer in the *Pictorial History of England* observes, she "insisted that all her Catholic subjects should go regularly to the Protestant church, and be in other respects to all appearance Protestants!" These two facts alone are enough to prove how false it is to say, that Catholics were persecuted not for their religion, but for their disaffection. We have

seen the refusal to acknowledge the queen's supremacy made high treason, and the Catholic religion suppressed by law ; and when the people rebelled against this tyranny, we see that they could obtain pardon only by renouncing, not their rebellion merely, but their faith. Such, then, being the state of the case, I think that all fair and candid Protestants must allow that the Catholics in Elizabeth's reign had a right to take up arms for their deliverance.

But if the Catholics were justified in having recourse to arms, the Pope was equally justified in encouraging and abetting them ; and that he did so in the case of the northern insurgents, by the help of his apostolic penitentiary, Dr. Morton, I have not the smallest wish to deny. Whatever our enemies may say, Catholics have never held that it is lawful to do evil that good may come. They have never thought they might rebel in the *bad* sense of the word, even to obtain the free exercise of their religion. They have vindicated rebellion only where it was *good* to rebel. The Catholics of those times believed they might lawfully resist, and even oppose by force of arms, such rulers as governed not according to the principles of justice and true religion ; but they were possessed with a conviction that subjects were not the best judges in their own case, and that it was safer to leave the decision of so difficult a question to a higher and an independent authority. They understood too well the horrors of civil war, and the spiritual evils that always follow in its train ; and besides, their faith taught them that temporal government was an ordinance of God, and to be obeyed therefore at much personal sacrifice. They believed that rulers, whether emperors or kings, or the chief magistrates of a free state, were, as St. Paul declares (Rom. xiii. 4), "God's ministers and avengers," and that it was only impiety and tyranny of the extremest sort that could justify revolt against their authority. As no man, or body of men, has a right to wage war unless at the command or with the permission of the supreme magistrate in the state, so were they persuaded that to rise against their rulers was a crime against God and against society, unless the act were sanctioned by that supreme spiritual power to which the nations of Europe were wor

to look for guidance in such matters,—the chair of blessed Peter, whose successor, in the person of the Pope, still reigned at Rome. Such, I repeat, was the conviction of that age. Up to the time of the so-called Reformation the Pope had exercised a power, which, though based on his purely spiritual prerogatives, was temporal in its reach and action. It matters not that princes did not acquiesce in every instance of its exercise: they who are in the wrong very commonly protest against the authority that condemns them; besides, in protesting, they did not deny the existence of the authority, but only complained that it was unjustly exercised in their particular case. The authority, then, existed, and was recognised, and appealed to, not only by one sovereign against another, but by the people against their rulers. The supremacy of the Pope was felt to be the mainstay of all authority and the bulwark of popular liberty. Any how it was the manner of the age: the nations would have it so. They believed it to be a common benefit to have a supreme judge or arbitrator in their differences; and the Popes found themselves invested with an office, which was none of their seeking,* but which they saw it was salutary for them to discharge, and which, when thus invited by the united voice of kings and people, they exercised with no ordinary vigour and decision. Such, so to speak, was the international law of Europe; and it is folly to ignore the fact, or to reason as if it never had existed.

But now as to this claim to depose kings, and, what is still more obnoxious in Protestant eyes, absolve subjects from their allegiance. Protestants can have no right to brand as “impious” and “damnable” in the Pope the exercise of a power which they have ever arrogated to themselves. Luther absolved the Germans from their obedience to the emperor Charles V. Calvin and Beza called on the Huguenots of France to rise against their sovereign. John Knox and the Presbyterian clergy of Scotland thundered out their anathemas against the queen regent, and afterwards against the unfortunate Mary; declaring that “no oath or promise can oblige any man to obey or give

* See the five Tracts in this series on “the Temporal Power of the Pope.”

assistance to tyrants against God." But all Protestants, however moderate in their views, believe that there are cases in which princes may justly be deposed; many even hold that they may be "murdered" by their subjects, if by murdered be meant judicially executed, as were Charles I. of England and Louis XVI. of France,—a "position" which, I may safely affirm, no Pope ever asserted or defended. Protestants, then, I say, very generally believe that princes may be deposed if they violate the rights and liberties of their subjects. They believe that oaths of allegiance cease to bind when the sovereign has broken the compact by which he reigns. They hold that the power of releasing from those oaths lies somewhere, whether it be with the chief council of the state, or with the people as represented by a national assembly; and that too whether such power or such assembly be formally recognised by the constitution or not. Nothing, they maintain, can destroy this natural right. The doctrine of non-resistance is certainly no English doctrine. It was to a successful rebellion that the present reigning family were indebted for their elevation to the throne of these realms; and there is scarcely an English or an Irish Protestant who would not style that act of insurrection by which James II. was driven from his dominions, the "glorious revolution of 1688." Not only James but his heirs for ever, being Catholics, were excluded from the crown on the plea that the original contract with the nation had been violated. The line of succession was changed, and the oath of allegiance transferred from one family to another. I have no wish to defend James's arbitrary proceedings; but thus much I will say, that, set the tyranny of the Stuart kings at the highest point you may, you can never make it resemble in kind the ruthless persecution which was deliberately perpetrated by Elizabeth against the adherents of the ancient faith.

Another example may be cited. When the American colonies revolted against the mother country England, the Declaration of Independence ran as follows: "We, the representatives of the United States of America, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name

and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states ; and that *they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown.*" You see, then, that the right of deposing princes and absolving subjects from their allegiance is no exclusive Popish doctrine. Protestants and Catholics are agreed as to the lawfulness of the act under certain circumstances ; but in the times of which I have been speaking, and in the then condition of Europe, Catholics held, in accordance with those principles which were only then beginning to be disallowed, that the Pope, as the spiritual Father of Christendom and the head of the great Catholic family, had the power to decide *when* the prince had forfeited his claim to the obedience of his subjects, and might justly be deposed from the supreme authority. They believed that to the Pope by right it belonged to pronounce the sentence of deposition ; and that, as their oath of allegiance was made to God, so no power less than that of the minister of God was competent to absolve them from it.

One most important fact also there is, which needs much to be considered ; and that is, that as in Christendom generally, so in England in particular, up to this time, none but Catholic princes were considered capable of reigning.* Such was the understood law of Europe ; and such was the ancient privilege of this realm. Europe, when it had but one faith, was as one religious confederation, with the Pope at its head ; and the laws of each kingdom were in accordance with this fundamental principle. The prince who broke the unity of faith, or failed to protect his people in the exercise of their religion, was considered to have, *ipso facto*, forfeited his crown. We read in the laws of Edward the Confessor, " The king, because he is the vicerent of the Supreme King, is appointed to this end, to rule the earthly kingdom and people of the Lord ; and above all to venerate His holy Church, and defend it from evil-doers, and to root out and destroy, and utterly remove

* This was the purport of a bull issued by Pope Paul IV., 15th March, 1559, which has been noticed by historians as aimed at Elizabeth.

from it, the wicked. Unless he do this he shall not retain so much as the name of king, but, as Pope John declares, shall forfeit the title." Protestants may talk of the bigotry of those times in which the government of Catholic nations was entrusted to Catholic kings alone; but they forget that in this British empire, which, including Ireland and the colonies, contains many millions of Catholics, the sovereign must, by the essential constitution of the realm, as settled at the Revolution, be himself a Protestant, and must swear at his coronation to uphold the Protestant religion. Elizabeth had sworn to maintain the honour, peace, rights, and privileges of the Church, as guaranteed by the laws of King Edward the Confessor as just cited; and the Pope declared her deposed because she had violated her engagement. Now who can doubt, that were Queen Victoria, in the mercy of God, to become a Catholic, the very men who are most loud in their condemnation of the Pope, would be foremost in declaring that the Queen of England, by becoming a Papist, had forfeited all claim to the allegiance of a Protestant people? Where, then, is the difference in principle? I see none, except that what is laudable in a Protestant is damnable in a Catholic.

I have now explained to you how it was that the Pope exercised this power of deposing princes; and I have also shewn you what good cause he had for putting it in force against Elizabeth. The terms of the bull are but a recital in the general of those acts of tyranny and religious persecution which it has been my object to bring before you. In the face of all the facts which have been adduced, who can doubt but that the Pope spoke the truth, and nothing but the truth, when he declared that Elizabeth had "brought the kingdom, but lately recovered to the Catholic faith, into a lamentable and fatal condition?" "For having by force prohibited the practice of the true religion and embraced the errors of the heretics, she hath destroyed the royal council, which was wont to consist of the ancient nobility of the realm,"—this was one of the grievances of which the northern insurgents complained,—“and filled it with men of low extraction and misbelievers; hath oppressed the adherents of the Catholic faith; abolished the sacrifices

of the Mass, prayers, fasts, distinction of meats, celibacy, and other Catholic rites ; commanded her subjects to comply with ungodly mysteries and practices ; ejected bishops, rectors of parishes, and other Catholic priests from their churches and benefices ; disposed of their ecclesiastical offices to heretics ; forbidden prelates, clergy, and people to recognise the see of Rome, or to obey its precepts and canonical sanctions ; compelled many to give in to her nefarious laws, to abjure the authority and obedience of the Roman Pontiff, and to acknowledge her sole mistress both in temporals and spirituals ; inflicted pains and penalties on those who, disregarding her dictation, have persevered in the unity of faith and customary obedience ; and lastly, hath cast the Catholic bishops and rectors into prison, where many, after languishing long in that sad state, have miserably ended their days." To which he adds, that "seeing this wicked and intolerable treatment has been multiplied to so many instances, and the oppression of religion and persecution of the faithful groweth worse and worse, we are constrained of necessity to have recourse to the weapons of justice, although our grief is inconsolable that we are driven to the use of such measures against one whose ancestors have deserved so well of the Christian commonwealth." Upon which follows the sentence of deposition and the absolution of her subjects from their allegiance. This bull was signed, on the 25th of February 1570, by the then reigning Pontiff Pius V.

A few remarks in conclusion must suffice.

Elizabeth had drawn this sentence on herself by her cruel persecution of her Catholic subjects and the violent suppression of their worship, as well as by her faithless treatment of Mary Queen of Scots and others near the throne. This is undeniable. But further : there is nothing to shew that had she dealt justly and humanely with the Catholics, and protected them in the exercise of their religion, the Pope would have endeavoured to excite her people against her, even though, as our adversaries must allow, a Protestant sovereign, and one who openly tolerated *heresy in a state but lately Catholic*, was an innovation on *the established order of things*. Elizabeth, however, *not a Protestant sovereign merely*, she was a persecutor

Catholics and of their faith ; and Protestants are bound to see and acknowledge this important distinction. Catholics have faithfully served a Protestant monarch ; they have ever been peaceable subjects where their religion was let alone. As they have suffered themselves to be stripped of their goods, and their bodies torn in pieces rather than compromise their faith, so nothing is more remarkable than the patience with which they have submitted to persecution from the civil power, even when strong enough to venture on resistance. Let Protestants shew us from the whole page of history a single instance of their co-religionists, with equal chances of success, enduring what Catholics endured from Elizabeth without an attempt at insurrection or an isolated act of outrage. Let them shew us the third part of a nation submitting for ten years to a galling persecution, which stopped at no act of violence short of actual murder. Why should not their spiritual Father take pity on those for whom their temporal sovereign had no mercy, and bid them rise like one man in defence of liberties which were dearer to them than their lives ? Why are princes and parliaments, generals and statesmen, to be honoured through all time for delivering a "Protestant nation"* from "Popery, slavery, and arbitrary power," and a Pope to be condemned eternally because he did the utmost he could do to emancipate an oppressed and terror-stricken people from the tyranny of an heretical queen and her merciless government ? Is it that Protestantism possesses the exclusive right to persecute, because it has the cant of religious liberty on its lips ?

Pius V. had charged the Catholics with the execution of the bull ; and the better to secure promptness and unanimity of action on their part, had involved in the same sentence of excommunication such as continued to obey Elizabeth as their queen ; of course, with the implied condition that they were powerful enough to resist. Nor have Protestants any right to condemn him for this. They have *never scrupled* to declare that all free-born Englishmen were bound, as they valued their religion and the blessings of civil liberty, to exclude the Stuarts from the throne. Pope

* Containing, in fact, be it remembered, many millions of Catholics.

Pius, with far more justice on his side, declared that it was the bounden duty of all good Catholics, as they valued the true faith and the liberties of the Church of God (in which, as a matter of fact, were included their civil liberties also), to depose their persecutor, Elizabeth, and acknowledge none but a Catholic as their sovereign. The bull was issued, as I have said, on the 25th of February; early on the morning of the 15th of May, a copy was found affixed to the palace-gates of the Protestant "bishop" of London, which was traced to one Felton, a gentleman of property residing at Southwark. On being taken before the council, he boldly confessed the deed, refused, when put to the torture, to disclose the names of his confederates or advisers, and suffered the horrible death of a traitor with all the spirit and constancy of a martyr. To Elizabeth, as queen, he would give no other title than that of a pretender; but as a token that he bore no ill-will to her person, he sent her a diamond ring, valued at 400*l.*, which he drew from his finger as he stood on the scaffold. Had the Catholic gentry, as a body, united this man's generous daring with a wise and vigorous use of the forces they possessed, they might perchance have saved themselves and their children's children years, nay centuries, of degradation and oppression, and preserved to their country the inestimable blessing of the true faith. It is impossible now to judge of their resources or their chances of success; but, as a matter of fact, the Catholics, from whatever cause, did not take advantage of the bull. Many of the deprived bishops and clergy even publicly declared that it was not binding upon them; indeed, Protestant historians, as well as contemporary writers, have asserted that the Catholics generally ignored the bull, and "abhorred the very idea of revolt," which, if true, only renders the subsequent bloody persecution the more infamously wicked. Anyhow, there was not even an attempt at insurrection, not a single disturbance of the public peace.

Such being the case, you may suppose, perhaps, that the queen would repeal her persecuting laws, or at least suspend their operation. The very contrary was the fact. *She not only put in force the laws which were already*

existence, but added others of a severer and more determined character. Perhaps you may say that the laws she added were directed merely against the execution of the Popish bull; in other words, against Popish treason. No; they were directed against the exercise, or rather I should say, the existence of the Popish religion.

In this her conduct was without excuse. She could not justly charge the priests of the Church even with uttering seditious doctrines. In the Catholic schools and seminaries for the education of priests abroad (for Catholic schools and colleges were forbidden by law in England), the question of the deposing power—which, though never, as I have said, an article of faith, it had been customary to treat of in the ordinary course of theological study—was absolutely prohibited as a topic of dispute, and the priests who were sent on the English mission were strictly ordered never to discuss it in public or in private, and to abstain from all interference with secular concerns. Nor in a single case was the contrary ever proved against them by their enemies. They were willing to accept Elizabeth as their sovereign in *fact*, and to waive the subject of her *right* altogether. But this did not satisfy the government; and whenever a man was discovered to be a priest, he was questioned and cross-questioned as to his belief in the Pope's deposing power. It was not enough that he acknowledged the queen's authority, and expressed his willingness to obey her in all temporal things; it was required that he should abjure the theological opinion, and condemn the exercise of the power under any circumstances whatever. In default of any proveable offence, he was put to the torture and made to convict himself; and they who, like Sir Thomas More, in a similar situation, endeavoured to baffle their tormentors by ingenious evasions, have been accused by Protestants of dishonest equivocation. It has even been argued that they who acknowledged the power of a Pope who had issued, or had not retracted, a *deposing* bull, "lived in a permanent state of treason," and *might justly*, therefore, be treated as traitors. But this is a *mode of reasoning* by which, as Mackintosh observes, "all *tyranny might be justified*, and peace for ever banished from *human society*." On this subject Hallam also has some

just and sensible remarks. "There can be no doubt," he says, "that the allegiance professed to the queen by the seminary priests and Jesuits, and, as far as their influence extended, by all Catholics, was with this reservation—till they should be strong enough to throw it off. But after all, when we come fairly to consider it, is not this the case with every disaffected party in every state? a good reason for watchfulness, but none for extermination. The distinction between a king by possession and one by right, was heard neither for the first nor for the last time in the reign of Elizabeth. It is the lot of every government that is not founded on the popular opinion of legitimacy, to receive only a precarious allegiance. Subject to this reservation, which was pretty generally known, it does not appear that the priests, or other Roman Catholics, examined at various times during this reign, are more chargeable with insincerity or dissimulation than accused persons generally are. That which renders these condemnations of Popish priests so iniquitous is, that the belief in, or rather the refusal to disclaim, a speculative tenet, dangerous indeed, and incompatible with loyalty, but not coupled with any overt act, was construed into treason; nor can any one affect to justify these sentences who is not prepared to maintain that a refusal of the oath of abjuration, while the pretensions of the house of Stuart subsisted, might lawfully or justly have incurred the same penalty."

By "loyalty" this writer means (as Protestants always do) submission to a temporal sovereign as such, without regard to the laws of God and His Church; but letting this pass, you will observe that on every principle of common justice Elizabeth's conduct calls for the loudest reprobation. Had she treated as traitors those only who were legally convicted of stirring up her subjects to rebellion, or openly disputing her title, leaving the Catholics free to deny her assumed spiritual supremacy, and practise their religion, her conduct might have been more leniently judged. But she passed a series of bloody laws, such as would have disgraced the legislature of any Pagan nation. She established a secret *inquisition* of the most terrible kind; she put suspected persons, men, women, and boys, to the torture; she rav

sacked the houses of the gentry at any hour in the day or the night; she hanged, disembowelled, dismembered, but cherished her unoffending subjects; she made it death to leave the Protestant religion, death to harbour a priest, death to be a priest; she filled her gaols with prisoners, and her coffers with their spoils; she shed blood like water. In short she followed up the course she had begun from the day she avowed herself a Protestant; and as Catholics would not give up their faith, she resolved on their extermination. These were her "Golden Days," of which I shall speak in my next Number.

The remaining history of the bull is soon told. Elizabeth affected to laugh at the "thunders of the Vatican," at the same time that she could not conceal her uneasiness and alarm. Perhaps she secretly trembled at the voice of the old man of Rome, though she carried herself bravely before her courtiers. Anyhow, with all her haughty assurance she could not sit still under the papal sentence, and begged the Emperor of Germany to procure its recall. The Pontiff rejected the application with this quiet rebuke, that if Elizabeth thought his bull had any force in it, why did she not seek to be reconciled? If not, why trouble herself about it at all? He had done his duty to the Church; let her now do her duty to her subjects. Gregory XIII., who succeeded Pope Pius, formally relieved the Catholics themselves from its operation, though he retained it still in force against Elizabeth and her adherents. After his Pontificate the bull was never renewed; and at the death of Elizabeth its application ceased. A new era had set in; whether for better or worse I will not here discuss. Unity of faith being gone, the powers of Europe no longer formed one Christian brotherhood, or acknowledged one common head; and as the Popes had exercised their temporal supremacy only with the consent, and indeed at the invitation, of their spiritual children, so have they never sought to resume *the power*, much less to disturb the relations that have *since subsisted* between one nation and another, or to interfere with the allegiance which, as a sacred duty, subjects owe in all temporal things to the rulers of their country.

Historical Library.

THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER;

OR,

GUNPOWDER PLOT.



By Permission.

LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

The Fifth of November.

WHAT Englishman is there who does not know, or at least think that he knows, all about the famous Fifth of November, 1605? Its anniversary has become one of the national holidays, like the anniversary of the Nativity of our Lord, or of His Resurrection or Ascension. Her Majesty's clergy are required to give public warning to their parishioners in church on the Sunday before, "for the due observation of the said day;" and on the day itself there is "a special form of prayer with thanksgiving" appointed to be used, and the rubric in the Book of Common Prayer says that the clergy must also read "publicly, distinctly, and plainly" the act of Parliament by which this annual commemoration is enjoined. Then, besides all this solemn observance of the day "at morning prayer" in churches, there is always a great variety of entertainments of a more popular kind going on in the streets in the evening and up to a late hour of the night; by way of a substitute, I suppose, for evening prayer, for which no special service has been provided. In a word, it is not too much to say that, with the exception of Christmas-day perhaps, there is scarcely a day in the whole year so well known to Englishmen, and having so distinct a character of its own, as this Fifth of November. Ash-Wednesday and Good Friday, Easter-day or Whit-Sunday, are as nothing to it; for a vast number of Englishmen know absolutely nothing of these days; know neither when they come round nor why they are observed; whereas every body recognises the Fifth of November when *it comes*, and knows *something* at least about its history. *This something* is not generally very much, to be sure; but *probably* it is as much as this, that on this day, a great *many* years ago, Papists were caught doing some very wicked

thing ; so that all who go to church to-day feel that they can reckon pretty certainly on hearing the Papists abused. In some pulpits indeed this is the one continually recurring theme of the preacher from one year's end to another ; but there are many others which, though ordinarily silent upon this subject, never fail to handle it with great effect on this particular day. In fact, the very prayers which are ordered to be read seem necessarily to supply the text for such a discourse ; for they talk about " Popish treachery and Popish tyranny," " the secret contrivance and hellish malice of Popish conspirators," " cruel and bloodthirsty Papists," " enemies that delight in blood," and a great deal more of the same mild, charitable, and truly Christian character. Where these phrases are explained and illustrated by the preacher, the amount of historical information usually imparted to the audience will be found to be something of this kind : " On this day, about 250 years ago, Papists conspired to destroy by gunpowder the king, lords, and commons in Parliament assembled, because they could not bear to be subject to a Protestant government ; without any provocation whatever, and out of sheer malice and wickedness, and because they held it to be a very meritorious act to kill heretics, especially heretical princes, the Papists of those times had recourse to this dreadful contrivance as the best means of summarily ridding themselves of a great nuisance ; moreover, they did not consider that in so doing they were committing any sin, or acting in any way opposed to the principles of their religion ; but on the contrary, that they were only acting in the strictest conformity with those principles, which, as is well known—for one of the prayers in the state service provided for the day expressly insinuates as much,—' turn religion into rebellion and faith into faction.' "

The popular idea, then, among our fellow-countrymen as to the history of the Fifth of November may be briefly stated thus : Guy Fawkes was the accredited agent and representative of the English Catholics, employed by them to murder *King James* and his Parliament, merely because *they were Protestants*. In the following pages I propose to set before you a true account of the matter ; and for thi

purpose I will begin my story at once from the date of Queen Elizabeth's death, which took place on the 24th of March, 1603.

This queen had reigned forty-five years, and during the whole of that period her Catholic subjects, more especially all ecclesiastics, had suffered most severe and relentless persecution. About two hundred (of whom three-fourths were priests, and the rest laymen) had been put to death for their religion. Many others had been imprisoned, and a still larger number had been plundered of well-nigh all their property by means of the heavy fines which were inflicted upon them for non-attendance at the Protestant worship. And only two months before her death, a new proclamation was issued, and the Archbishop of Canterbury and others were appointed commissioners to carry it into effect, whereby all Catholic ecclesiastics were required to leave the country within three months, *under pain of death*. However, "man proposes and God disposes," and in less than two months from the issuing of this proclamation the queen herself was dead.

It had been matter of considerable doubt and anxiety during the latter part of her reign, who should be her successor. James, the king of Scotland, was the next of kin, being lineally descended from Margaret, the eldest daughter of Henry VII., whose male line had now become extinct; but hereditary succession was by no means so regular and certain in those days as it has now become: a good deal of weight was attributed to the will of the preceding sovereign, and Henry VIII. had, by his last will and testament, expressly excluded the Scottish line in favour of the issue of his younger sister Mary. This might be supposed to throw some doubt upon James's claim; and there were not wanting weighty considerations that might have seemed likely to induce certain parties in the country to dispute it in favour of another of Margaret's descendants, Lady Arabella Stuart. The Privy Council, however, at once proclaimed King James, and not a voice was raised against him. The Catholics in particular hailed his accession, not only because they felt that they had some claim upon the indulgence of the new monarch by reason of their sufferings in

the cause of his mother, the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, but also because he had given distinct assurances of toleration to some of their number, whilst yet he remained at his court in Scotland. Hence one of the English Jesuits, writing on the 16th of April to another of his order in Rome, speaks thus: "We have a golden time of unexpected freedom abroad. . . . Great hope is of toleration; and so general a consent of Catholics in the king's proclaiming, that it seemeth God will work much. All sorts of religions live in hope and suspense; yet the Catholics have great cause to hope for great respect, in that the nobility all almost labour for it, and have good promise thereof from his majesty."

The new king set out from his native country on the 5th of April, and on the 7th of the following month he entered London. The Catholics lost no time in laying before him a humble supplication for the toleration of their faith. In this interesting document, which is still extant, they speak as men "almost overwhelmed with persecutions for their consciences;" and they ground their appeal for "some commiseration and favour," partly on the consideration of all they had endured "for his blessed mother's right," partly also on the broad general ground of equity and justice. The country is divided, they say, in matters of religion, "into four parts: 1, of Protestants, who have domineered all the former queen's days; 2, Puritans, who have crept up apace among them; 3, Atheists or politicians, who were bred upon their brawls and contentions in matters of faith; and 4, Catholics, who, as they are opposite to all, so are they detested of all, because error was ever an enemy to truth." Of these four parties, they go on to say, that it would be impossible to suppress either of the first three, and therefore they beseech his majesty to yield the same favour to themselves also. "We request no more favour at your grace's hands, than that we may securely profess our religion; . . . the free use of this religion we request, if not in public churches, at least in *private houses*; if not with approbation, yet with toleration, *without molestation*." Nothing could be more just, modest, and reasonable than this request of his "most sacred ma-

jesty's most devoted servants, the Catholics of England ;" and it is probable that the king himself felt it to be so. However, no answer was returned until the month of July, when a large body of Catholics of high rank were summoned by the royal command to Hampton Court; and having been received there by the lords of the council with every mark of respect, they were told that it was the king's intention for the future "to exonerate" them from the fine of 20*l.* a month imposed by the statute of Elizabeth as the penalty of recusancy, and that they were to enjoy "this grace and relaxation as long as they kept themselves upright in all civil and true carriage towards his majesty and the state, without contempt." To this the Catholics objected that they feared lest the mere fact of their recusancy (that is, their continuing to absent themselves from Protestant worship, their hearing Mass, and the like) might be held for an act of contempt; but the lords of the council gave them the most solemn assurances that this was not his majesty's meaning; recusancy alone should *not* be taken for contempt, and they were to communicate his majesty's gracious intentions upon this point to all their brethren throughout the country.

This, though falling short probably of what the more sanguine among the Catholics had expected, was very satisfactory as far as it went; and had this moderation been as faithfully practised as it was fairly promised, we should never have heard of Guy Fawkes and the Fifth of November. But, as we shall presently see, it was not so. I believe that when the king made these promises he really intended to keep them; but he was a weak, timid, and selfish man, who cared far more for the wealth and honours of his new kingdom than for truth and justice and the well-being of his subjects; and his ministers belonged, for the most part, to that class of religionists who were too truly described in "the Supplication" as "atheists or politicians," and who therefore hated the Church and all who belonged to it with *a most intense hatred*. Moreover, the king himself hated *another class* of religionists in the country, namely the *Puritans*; and it was difficult to grant the toleration that he *wished to the Catholics* without extending the same favour

to this obnoxious class; and in process of time this was the very rock on which he split.

But first I must briefly mention a mysterious conspiracy that was discovered about this time, or rather just before this meeting at Hampton. The particulars of the conspiracy have never been clearly ascertained; and Hume says that history gives us no clue to unravel them. Its professed object was to dethrone James and to set up Arabella Stuart in his stead; and Sir James Mackintosh, a Protestant historian, considers that the real end aimed at in this change was "the establishment of a general religious toleration." If this were so, we can at once understand how there came to be united in this plot men of such opposite characters and principles as Watson and Clarke, two Catholic priests; Lord Grey of Wilton, a Puritan; Lord Cobham and his brother, men of no principle at all; and Sir Walter Raleigh, reputed a free-thinker, or, as it was then called, an atheist.

Sir Edward Coke, the attorney-general of that day, wittily said that "these treasons were like Samson's foxes, joined in the tail, though their heads were severed." The truth seems to be that each of these conspirators had his own separate reason for being discontented with the existing government, and hoped by uniting with others as discontented as himself, to succeed in overthrowing it. Cobham and Raleigh were political opponents of Cecil, whose influence was now all-powerful with the king, and they had reason to apprehend the most serious consequences to themselves from this unlimited power lodged in the hands of their mortal and unscrupulous enemy; Lord Grey, in addition to a personal dislike of James, by whom he considered that he had been slighted, probably looked upon himself as the representative of the Puritan party, who, like the Catholics, were suffering under penalties and disabilities on account of their religion; and lastly, Watson was a man who, after having written in favour of James's pretensions to the throne, at a time when it was thought not unlikely that there might be other claimants for it, and after having been most kindly received by the king himself during the *lifetime of Elizabeth*, ventured to wait upon him again *soon after his arrival in England*, and to remind him of hi

former promises; but not being received as cordially as he expected, he gave way to feelings of irritation and discontent, and was now as anxious to be rid of the "canny Scot" as he had been before zealous to secure his accession. Thus, personal dissatisfaction and discontent seems to have been the chief moving principle with each of the conspirators; and it is more than probable that, had they succeeded in their designs, they would have found it impossible to co-operate in establishing any other system of government in the place of that which they had combined to overthrow. The conspiracy, however, was brought to nought through the carelessness or treachery of some who were concerned in it; the conspirators were arrested, tried, and found guilty of high treason; the two Catholic priests and another were executed, and the rest pardoned.

The discovery of this plot took place during the first week in July, and was prior therefore to those promises of kindness and toleration which were given to the Catholic nobles and gentry at Hampton Court; neither did any thing occur, during the remainder of this year, calculated to arouse the fears of the Catholic body, and to make them anticipate the revival of the penal laws. This unwonted respite from persecution, however, was not destined to be of long duration. Early in January 1604, there was held another and far more famous Hampton-Court conference, between James and his "bishops" and council on the one hand, and four of the leading ministers from among the Puritans, or Dissenters, as they would now be called, on the other. We need not enter into the details of this conference; but the result was in the highest degree unsatisfactory to the Puritans. The king shewed himself a most zealous partisan of his own state-clergy, gave judgment against the Dissenters, and only allowed a certain interval during which the obligation of conformity should not be enforced. On the 9th of February some members of Parliament ventured to present petitions praying for more favourable terms for these persecuted nonconformists; but the king's rage and indignation knew no bounds. He swore that both his mother and himself had been haunted by Puritan devils from their very cradles, and that he was now

resolved at all risks to rid himself of such malicious spirits ; at the same time he went on to protest with equal violence against the Catholics, saying that if he thought his son and heir was ever likely to grant them toleration in time to come, he would rather see him at this moment lying dead in his grave than that he should live to do such a thing. This language may sound very right and reasonable, perhaps, as coming from the lips of the head of an Establishment which claims to be equally removed from Popery on the one hand and Puritanism on the other. It should be remembered, however, that this was the same king who, in addressing the General Assembly at Edinburgh a few years before, had said of the form of worship established in this country, that "it was an ill-said Mass in English, wanting nothing of the Mass but the liftings, whereas the Kirk of Scotland was the purest in the world ;" and who, at a much later period, had said in his first speech to Parliament, that he looked upon the Church of Rome as their mother Church, though "defiled with some infirmities," and had, moreover, given express promises of toleration to those of his subjects who belonged to that Church. This single instance may suffice to give the reader a general idea of what Sir J. Mackintosh calls James's "*utter and habitual want of truth*," both as concerns Puritans and Catholics. Henceforth I shall speak only of the measures which he took against the latter, and which, in the end, resulted in the Gunpowder Plot.

At a meeting of the Privy Council which was held on the Sunday after the ebullition of passion already mentioned, the same threats against Papists were repeated, and the bishops were charged to give orders to all the judges and inferior officers throughout the land that they should see the laws speedily executed with all rigour against them. This again was followed, in a few days (February 22), by a proclamation commanding all Jesuit and other priests, whether secular or regular, to depart out of the realm before the 19th of March. The avowed object of this proclamation was the extermination of the Catholic religion ; and whilst it was acknowledged that this might seem to indicate "*a greater severity towards that sort of our subjects wh*

call themselves Catholics than by our proceedings with them hitherto we have given cause to expect," it was pretended that this increased severity was sufficiently justified by the conspiracy in which Clarke and Watson had been engaged, and which, as we have seen, was considered at the time of such trivial importance that it did not prevent the king from giving the Catholics distinct promises of toleration even immediately after its discovery. Now, however, this same king sent for the Recorder of London, assured him that it had been ever far from his intention to grant the Catholics a permanent toleration, and desired him to inform the citizens that whereas on coming to the throne he had been induced to mitigate the fines of all Popish recusants, this was only that he might give them a year of probation to conform themselves to the established religion of the land; but that, "seeing that it had not wrought that effect, he had now fortified all the laws that were against them, and commanded they should be put in execution to the uttermost." There can be no doubt but that a great deal of this violent language and disgraceful breach of promises is to be attributed to the motive I have already mentioned, viz. the necessity under which the king found himself of pressing with impartial rigour upon Catholics whilst he was supporting the Archbishop of Canterbury in his proceedings against the non-conforming Puritans. But there was also another powerful motive which encouraged him in the same course, viz. want of money; for he had brought over with him from Scotland a number of needy followers who were clamorous for the royal bounty, and the Commons in those days were not over-liberal in their pecuniary dealings with the sovereign. Under these circumstances, the penal laws against Catholics seemed to offer themselves as a ready instrument for raising money. Accordingly the fine of 20*l.* a month for absence from the Protestant churches was again enforced; and that not only for the time present and to come, but also for all the time that had passed since the *accession of James*; in other words, payment of thirteen *fin*es at once was demanded of all Catholics. This of course reduced many families of moderate incomes to a state of absolute beggary, and was in itself an act of injustice and

cruelty calculated to excite the deepest feelings of indignation and hatred against the government that was guilty of it. But the king chose to go yet further in the persecution of his Catholic subjects, and to add to their cup of sufferings an indignity of the most offensive kind. *He farmed them out to some of these needy Scotch followers to make what they could out of them*;* that is to say, he allowed each of these hungry dependents to pick out a certain number of wealthy Catholics, and then, in his bounty, he "bestowed" these persons upon them, making over to them whatever claims the Crown possessed, or might hereafter possess; for fines, and authorising them either to proceed at law for the recovery of the appointed penalties, or else to enter into whatever composition they could induce the unfortunate sufferers to make, whether the grant of an annuity for life or the immediate payment of some considerable sum. The jealousy between England and Scotland at that time was such as we have no idea of at the present day; and it is difficult therefore for us to realise the full extent of the exasperating character of this enactment. Every one can see, however, that (to use a common expression) it was "adding insult to injury," and an insult of no common kind; and they will not be surprised to hear that the Catholics resented it as such, and that it gave rise to jealousies and heart-burnings without end.

Doubtless if all Catholics had been saints, a noble opportunity was now offered to them to exercise the virtue of patience in an heroic degree; and it is certain, both that the great majority of English Catholics really *did* behave themselves with the most exemplary patience, and that the most earnest exhortations to this effect were addressed to the whole body by their ecclesiastical superiors. Hence, even as late as the month of October in this year, by which time at least two priests and a layman had suffered the extreme penalties of the law, and the fines and other harassing enactments against Catholics had been in full activity for a period of seven or eight months—the same Jesuit who has

* The very words used in one of the state-papers of the time are these: "A list of such recusants as his Majesty hath granted liberty to his servants to make profit of."

been mentioned before could write to his correspondent in Rome in these terms: "I am assured that the best sort of Catholics will bear all their losses with patience; but how these tyrannical proceedings of such base officers may drive particular men to desperate attempts, that I cannot answer for." It is precisely one of these "desperate attempts of particular men" that we are now inquiring into; and they were the tyrannical proceedings of the government which gave rise to it. A new act of Parliament was passed, to provide for "the due execution of the statutes against Jesuits, seminaries, priests, and recusants;" every individual who had studied or resided, or should hereafter study or reside, in any foreign college or seminary—that is to say, in any *Catholic* college, for Catholic places of education were not allowed in England—was declared incapable of inheriting, purchasing, or enjoying lands or property of any kind within the realm; a proclamation was published, admonishing the judges and magistrates to be rigorous in enforcing the penal laws; courts were held *every six weeks*, whereat recusants were presented and condemned, and the fines levied upon them with increasing severity; houses were broken into at night under the pretence of searching for ecclesiastics; in a word, as one of the sufferers truly testifies, "the courses taken were even more severe than in the times of Bess." In the county and city of York alone there were indicted in this year about 1000 recusants; in Lancashire 600; in the western counties of Devon, Dorset, Cornwall, Somerset, Wilts, and Hants, 924; in six other counties, 700; in seven others, 923; in eight others, 1865; in five others 114; making in all—and we have not enumerated *all* the counties of England, because we have not the statistics of all—the extraordinary total of 6126. Was it to be wondered at that under the pressure of so severe and so universal a persecution some among the proscribed party should have had recourse to the most desperate remedies, even remedies involving the commission of great and grievous crimes?

Among the sufferers was one Robert Catesby, a gentleman of family and fortune, whose father had been thrown into prison more than once for his religion, but who in his

younger days had himself conformed to the Established Church, and lived a life of dissipation and extravagance. By and by he returned to the religion of his forefathers, and from that moment he seems to have applied himself to the one only thought of effecting something for the relief of his fellow Catholics. He mixed himself up in one or two political intrigues with this end during the reign of Elizabeth, for which he was fined in the sum of 3000*l*. The present conduct of King James and his government inspired him with the idea of renewing these attempts; but it was no longer of any use to look for aid, as on former occasions, from any of the foreign powers, for the kings of France and of Spain, and even the Pope himself, had declared in favour of James; it was equally hopeless to attempt an open insurrection, for the whole body of Catholics was far inferior in point of numbers to that of the Protestants, and moreover it was certain that a very large proportion even of this minority would have nothing at all to do with measures of this kind. He was therefore led to contrive some secret plot or stratagem, and the particular form which his plotting and scheming eventually assumed is already well known to you: he determined to blow up the parliament-house with gunpowder, at a moment when the king, lords, and commons should be all assembled there; thus securing, as he thought, the simultaneous destruction of those who were responsible for the enactment and execution of the penal laws. The first person to whom he communicated his terrible design (Mr. Thomas Winter, one of his most intimate friends,) was horror-struck at the idea, and denounced it as wicked and cruel. To this Catesby replied, that it was one of the natural rights of man to repel force by force; and that as to cruelty, only let him compare it with all the cruelties that had been exercised during so many years upon themselves and their friends; let him reckon up the numbers that had been embowelled alive by the public executioner, the still larger number who had been thrown into prison, and many of whom had died there, and finally the immense number of families who had been unjustly robbed of all their property, and brought to absolute want and starvation. Winter was silenced if not convinced by these

considerations, and in the course of the next two months three others were admitted to a knowledge of the fatal secret : Percy, a distant relative of the Earl of Northumberland, and, like Catesby, a conspirator in the time of Elizabeth ; Wright, his brother-in-law ; and Guy Fawkes, a soldier of fortune, and of great personal courage. These five took an oath of mutual secrecy, and received holy communion together, as a further pledge of fidelity, from the hands of a priest, who, however, at that time, knew absolutely *nothing* of their bloody purpose. This was in the month of May 1604 ; but there was no intention of carrying the plan into execution until they had first seen what could be done by means of the Spanish ambassador, who was just then engaged in negotiating terms of peace with the English monarch. The negotiation was not concluded until after the middle of August, and it was soon ascertained beyond all question, that whatever the Spanish envoy may have attempted, he certainly had not succeeded in obtaining any promise of relief for the afflicted Catholics ; for on the 5th of September a new commission was appointed for the banishment of all their missionaries ; and about a fortnight afterwards twenty-one priests and three laymen were taken from different prisons, and shipped off into perpetual exile, although some of these (as they themselves declared in an address which they forwarded to the Lords of the Council, "from the sea-side this 24th of September, 1604") had "his Majesty's gracious general pardon to shew under the great seal of England, by which they had been restored unto the peace of his majesty and place of true subjects." These measures at once encouraged and exasperated the five conspirators, and they proceeded with the task they had undertaken with redoubled energy. I need not tell you all the particulars of their progress ; how they hired lodgings adjoining the parliament-house, and opened a mine there, and began to dig through the wall ; how they were hindered in their work, first by water getting into the mine, and then *by the extraordinary thickness of the wall, which was not less than three yards ;* how they afterwards accidentally *discovered a cellar immediately below the parliament-house and succeeded in hiring this instead, &c. &c. ; for all these*

particulars can be found, fully and correctly told, in many Protestant books, and I am chiefly anxious to tell you about the moral and religious part of the history; how such a plot came into existence at all; who was its author, how many were privy to it, and other details of the same kind, upon which Protestant books are not to be trusted. I need only say therefore that before the end of the year two other persons had been admitted to a knowledge of what was going on, and had been in like manner sworn to secrecy; one of these was Catesby's servant, and the other a Catholic gentleman named Keyes, who had suffered the loss of a considerable portion of his property, simply because he would not conform to the state-established Protestant religion. In the course of the next two months, that is, before the end of the month of February 1605, the number of the conspirators was still further increased by the addition of three other persons under similar circumstances; indeed two of them, Winter and Wright, were brothers of those already engaged in the plot, and the name of the third was Grant. Thus ten men were now bound by the most solemn oaths of secrecy to one another, and actively engaged in different ways, in preparing for the execution of their plan as soon as Parliament should be assembled. There were some amongst them, however, who could not altogether stifle the voice of conscience as to the lawfulness of the enterprise in which they had embarked; moreover they saw that besides the king and his ministers, who must fall victims to the plot, it would also of necessity involve the destruction of many others against whom they had no cause of complaint, who had done them no injury, but, on the contrary, had used their best endeavours to mitigate the severity of the penal laws, and perhaps were bound to them by ties of friendship or of blood. This consideration especially filled the minds of some of them with scruples; and it was agreed that, without revealing the particulars of the plot, they should yet contrive to get the opinion of some experienced spiritual director upon the subject. With this view Catesby proposed an imaginary case to *Garnet*, the provincial of the Jesuits, and then made use of the answer which he received, representing it to his associ-

ates as a positive approval of the plan. The case which he proposed was this: he pretended that he was going to enlist in the service of a foreign prince at that time engaged in war; that he had no doubt of the justice of the war, but that he had scruples of conscience as to particular actions in which he might be called upon to take part, such for instance as storming a town, where many unarmed women and innocent children would necessarily perish with the armed and guilty rebels. What was his duty in cases of this kind? In reply to this question, Garnet assured him that it was the unanimous opinion of theologians that obedience to the commands of the general was lawful in such cases, since otherwise a man might be hindered for an indefinite period, or even for ever, from recovering his just rights. Whether Catesby really thought he had stated his case fairly to the Jesuit father, I do not know; anyhow he lost no time in telling his companions that the scruple which they had suggested was overruled. It would seem, however, as though even Catesby himself, arch-conspirator as he was, were yet not altogether free from uncomfortable misgivings as to the real nature of the plot he had on hand. He appears to have continually sought the company of certain Jesuits, and to have been ever harping in conversation upon the subject that was uppermost in his mind, without daring openly to reveal himself. On one occasion, therefore, Father Garnet took the opportunity of insisting in his presence upon the duty of patient submission and endurance, and of leaving vengeance to Almighty God; whereupon Catesby exclaimed with great warmth, "It is to such as you that we owe our present miseries. This doctrine of non-resistance makes us slaves. No power of priest or Pope can rob us of our natural right to resist injustice." On another occasion, Catesby openly defended against Garnet the right of English Catholics under existing circumstances to have recourse to violence, plainly told him *that something of the kind was actually in contemplation, and offered to reveal to him all the circumstances of the plot under a promise of secrecy.* This offer Garnet most *firmly declined, whereupon they had a long and angry altercation upon the subject: Catesby maintaining that they*

were perfectly justified in overthrowing James's sovereignty, inasmuch as he had violated all his promises of toleration ; Garnet, on the contrary, alleging the authority of a letter which he had lately received from the General of his order in Rome, and which began with these words: " We have heard through a very private channel that the Catholics are meditating some enterprise for their liberty; but as such an attempt, especially at the present moment, is calculated not only to inflict the greatest injury on religion, but also to involve the Catholics themselves in the most serious danger, his Holiness the Pope has commanded me to write to you in his name, requiring you to employ whatever influence you possess with the principal persons in question, and particularly with the archpriest" (that is, with the ecclesiastic who was practically the Bishop of the Catholics of England at that time), " in preventing even the discussion of such matters. . . . His Holiness *condemns* the agitation of all such designs among Catholics." Nothing could be plainer than this; but Catesby only repeated his former text, swearing that neither priest nor Pope could deprive men of their natural right of self-defence. The utmost which Garnet could do was to prevail upon him to suspend all further operations until they had despatched a faithful messenger to Rome, who should lay the matter more fully before his Holiness, and obtain a fresh statement of his judgment thereupon. Garnet therefore replied to the General's letter on the 24th of July, saying that he had already, on four different occasions, prevented a disturbance; and that he had no doubt but that now also he should be able to hinder any outbreak, unless, indeed, any very urgent necessity should arise, as, for instance, a partial insurrection of Catholics in some one particular province, which might perhaps force the Catholics of other provinces to rise also; for, he adds, " there are not a few who cannot be restrained by the bare command of his Holiness. These persons protest that no priest shall henceforth be privy to their designs; and they complain more especially of us (the Jesuits), and even some of our friends join in this complaint, *that we oppose an obstacle to their success. To appease these people, therefore, and to gain time, during which th*

and then awaited the issue in a state of the deepest anxiety.

It was too late, however, for the conspirators to be withdrawn from a purpose which they had been meditating so long, and which was now on the very eve of its accomplishment. To each of the parties concerned was already allotted his own special share in the business : Guy Fawkes had undertaken the desperate office of firing the mine ; Catesby was to proclaim the heir-apparent at Charing Cross, and at the same time to issue a declaration abolishing two or three of the principal national grievances of the day, hoping thereby to enlist the sympathies of the people on their side ; while Sir Everard Digby and others were to entertain at one of his places of residence in the country all the Catholic peers and other members of Parliament whom they were anxious to rescue from the general destruction. But in the meanwhile, ten days before the blow was to have been struck, their secret had been betrayed ; it matters not to inquire how or by whom, though I suppose there can be no doubt but that it was by Tresham. Guy Fawkes was apprehended at the very entrance of the cellar, soon after midnight, on the morning of the 5th of November ; by four o'clock he was in the presence of the king and council undergoing a rigorous examination, during which he answered all their questions with boldness and dignity. When one of the Scottish noblemen asked him what he had intended to do with all those barrels of gunpowder that had been found in the cellar, he immediately replied, "To blow the Scottish beggars back to their native mountains." He frankly declared his intention of destroying the Parliament, as the only means of putting an end to religious persecution ; but refused to say whether or not he had any accomplices. At the end of the examination he was committed to the Tower, and there subjected to the utmost severities of torture ; but all to no purpose ; he refused to reveal any thing whatever ; so that if (as is *probable*) Tresham had said nothing of the names of the *conspirators*, but only unfolded the real nature of the plot, *it is possible* that they might never have been detected but *for their own imprudence*. The moment they heard of the

seizure of Fawkes, they mounted their horses and fled into the country, not singly and in as secret a manner as they could, but in companies of two or three together, and along the public highway. "They rode so fast a pace, and with such resolution," says a contemporary, "that it was very hard to overtake them, and would not have been easy to stay them." They went straight to the house of Sir Everard Digby, where they arrived very late in the evening, greatly to the dismay of the assembled guests, most of whom were utterly ignorant of what had been in agitation, and all, excepting two or three, now precipitately took their leave. One of these new associates, Mr. Lyttleton, seems to have invited them to fly for shelter to his house in Staffordshire; and with this intent they set out with haste, accompanied by their servants, to traverse the counties of Warwick and Worcester, seeking to engage the Catholic gentry whose residences lay along that road to join them in a general insurrection. In this, however, they were signally disappointed; every Catholic from whom they solicited aid shut his doors against them, and the sheriff of each county through which they passed hastened to pursue them with an armed force. Early on the morning of the 8th inst., having arrived at Mr. Lyttleton's house late on the preceding evening, they prepared to turn upon their pursuers, and to give them battle. A spark of fire, however, chanced to fall upon their powder; and three or four of their number were severely injured by the explosion. This left them without any means of defence but their own swords, so that when the sheriff and his company came up about eleven o'clock, they were soon taken prisoners. Catesby, Percy, and the two Wrights were shot in the course of the affray, and two or three others managed to escape for a few days or weeks. By and by, however, they were all taken prisoners; and on the 30th of January in the following year they suffered the extreme penalty of the law as traitors, excepting Tresham, who died in the Tower, probably by poison. Two days before their execution, Father Garnet and another Jesuit were apprehended; and these too *in process of time* suffered the same penalty, though Garnet knew nothing of the conspiracy beyond what I ha

told you before, and Father Oldcorne never knew any thing at all until it had been discovered and brought to nought. Father Greenway, to whom Catesby had himself confessed it, found means to escape to the continent.

Thus ended the famous Gunpowder Plot; that is, as far as the persons themselves who had any hand in it were concerned. Its consequence, however, to the Catholic body did not, of course, end here. The archpriest (or bishop, as we might almost call him, of the English Catholics) published an address to the Catholic clergy and laity two days after the discovery of the plot, but before the apprehension of the conspirators, in which he speaks of it as "an intolerable, uncharitable, scandalous, and desperate fact," "a detestable advice;" he declares that, "without most grievous offence of God and Holy Church, private violent attempts cannot be thought of, much less may be aided and maintained by Catholics; for it is our parts to make a virtue of necessity, and to make our gain and increase by patience and prayer;" finally, he exhorts the clergy "to have a careful eye over their ghostly children, that they fail not in duty towards God and their king, that so our suffering may be our succour, our obedience our ease, and our quiet behaviour may procure a mitigation of our troubles." This charge is dated on the 7th of November; and before the end of the month another was published enforcing the same lesson of dutiful submission to the king, and expressing the same abhorrence of the late "detestable and damnable practice, odious in the sight of God and horrible to the understanding of men." Even the king himself, both in Parliament and in the proclamations which he issued for the apprehension of the conspirators, absolved the great mass of his Catholic subjects from all participation in the crime, though he did so in that absurd and ungracious way in which such acknowledgments are wont to be made by Protestant controversialists in all ages, that is, by pretending that those whom they were obliged to acquit were *better than their system*; they *either did not know*, or did not believe, all the true grounds of *Popery*; "many honest men," he says, "blinded with some opinions of Popery"—(he particularly mentions the number of the sacraments, transubstantiation, "or some such

school question," as he ignorantly calls it)—"may yet remain good and faithful subjects, whilst, on the other hand, none of those that truly know and believe the whole grounds and conclusions of the Catholic doctrines can ever prove either good Christians or faithful subjects ;" in other words, all who were good Catholics were bad subjects, and all who were bad Catholics were good subjects. But however well it might answer the purpose of James and his ministers to draw these false distinctions by word of mouth or in printed proclamations, they took care that no difference should be made practically between the guilty and the innocent, but that all alike should be brought under penal laws of increased severity. They immediately set to work to enact laws against all the Catholics of England in every relation of life, whether engaged in any of the learned professions or simply as masters or servants, husbands or wives, parents or children, heirs or executors. All were declared incompetent to be either executors or guardians ; for every Catholic servant the master was to pay a fine of ten pounds a month ; for every child not baptised by the Protestant minister the parents were fined in the sum of one hundred pounds ; for every corpse not buried in a Protestant churchyard the executors must pay a fine of twenty pounds ; every child educated in foreign parts forfeited his inheritance to the Protestant next of kin ; no Catholic could practise either as a surgeon or as a physician, neither in common nor in civil law ; no Catholic could reside within ten miles of the city of London, or go more than five miles from his own house without written leave and license under the seals of four of his Majesty's justices of the peace. Every Catholic was liable to have his house searched at any hour either of day or night ; all of his books and furniture that might seem to have any relation to his religion might be burnt, and all his horses and arms taken away, by order of the neighbouring magistrates. Lastly, that abominable system which has been already mentioned of farming out the wealthy Catholic recusants to court-favourites "to make profit of" was again employed, but with this additional *hardship*, that, whereas under the old law nothing could be enforced beyond the legal fine of 20l. a month, now the

king, or those to whom he had made over his rights, could refuse to accept this fine, and seize, if they preferred it, all the personal estate, and two-thirds of the real estate, of any recusants who had been "bestowed" upon them.

All these aggravations of cruelty were inflicted upon the English Catholics by two acts of Parliament which received the royal assent on the 7th of May, 1606; and may be said to have been a direct and immediate consequence of the Gunpowder Plot, that is, of the feelings of revenge and fanaticism which the discovery of that plot both inflamed to the highest degree, and at the same time furnished a very plausible excuse for indulging to the uttermost. That they were not justified by any plea of political expediency as necessary to secure the safety of the king and the peace of the country, is abundantly clear from the history that has been given in these pages. Thirteen conspirators, belonging to a class of the community of whom upwards of six thousand had been indicted under the penal laws during a single year, was a number too insignificant to call for measures of such universal application and extreme severity. But it was a golden opportunity of which the bigotry of the nation was determined to make the most; indeed, it was for this very reason that Cecil had allowed the plot to go on up to the very eve of its intended execution, as though he had not known all about it for ten days before; for he rightly judged that the apparent imminence of the danger, and the extraordinary manner in which it would seem to have been avoided, would create a deep impression upon the people, would excite them to the highest pitch of alarm, and make them ready to vote any thing and every thing that ministers might choose to propose against the Popish recusants; and the cowardly monarch cared too little for justice to be induced to make any stand against such intentions.

I have now given you a full and particular account of the plot as far as it is known and has been described by our most accurate and impartial historians; and I leave it with *confidence* to your own judgment to say how far it is justly chargeable to the Catholic Church, and how far to the perjury of an English king and the cruel tyranny of an English Parliament.

Library of Christian Doctrine.

THE CHURCH OUR INSTRUCTOR IN SCRIPTURE;

OR,

Do Catholics know any thing of the Bible?



By Permission.

LONDON:
BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.
READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

The Church our Instructor in Scripture.

WE have on a former occasion considered the Church as the Dispenser of Holy Scripture, and have endeavoured to shew the principle on which she has acted in the fulfilment of that office,—here bestowing, there withholding, as she has judged most expedient for the wants of her children, but ever with the same object of more perfectly instructing them and more safely guiding them in the way of salvation. But while we freely admit that there have been times when she has laid restrictions on the reading of the Holy Scriptures themselves by individuals,—nay, further, that at no time would she encourage such reading by all persons absolutely without reserve,—it must not be for a moment supposed that, in so doing, she was or is withholding from her children the means of becoming acquainted with divine truth. On the contrary, to bestow such means of instruction has been, in all ages, the object of her most strenuous efforts; so that, whether or not she has considered it desirable that all should be equally familiar with the sacred Scriptures themselves as a whole, she has ever most fervently desired that all should be instructed, to the utmost limit of their capacity, in the subject-matter of divine revelation.

For what is divine revelation intended to teach us? Nothing less than that one great science which we must all learn as we value our salvation—that which is emphatically called the sacred science; for it is in fact the very wisdom of God, as He has been pleased to reveal it to His creatures. It makes known to us a system of truths concerning His

own nature, and concerning creatures as they relate to Him—more especially concerning ourselves, the end of our being, and the means of accomplishing that end. This is, indeed, the most excellent of sciences, since it treats of God, the very fountain of all excellence; and the most important to ourselves, since it teaches us for what end we were created, and how we may attain it; or, in other words, how we may attain the perfection of our being, or what we call happiness. Surely this is the one master-science, to which all others are immeasurably inferior, being indeed only really valuable in proportion as they minister to this. And moreover, though this science, in its higher developments, would drain to the uttermost the noblest created intelligence, and remain itself unexhausted and unfathomed, yet in its elements it may be apprehended by the simplest child; and in those elements all must be instructed, at least in some degree, who are come to the use of reason, as they hope for happiness hereafter; for God has willed that faith in the truths He has revealed should be a condition of our salvation; and, in order to believe, it is evident that we must know what we have to believe.

Such, then, is the science which it is the office and design of the Church to impart to each and all of her children in such measure as they are capable of receiving it. Let this be well understood. The Church is our appointed instructor in divine truth and the way of salvation. It is this knowledge—*emphatically this*, and not the mere text of the Bible—which it is the object of the Church to impart. But inasmuch as the Bible is the inspired word of God and a treasury of divine truths, when her children are sufficiently instructed in the faith, and have sufficient humility to derive benefit from the immediate perusal of the written word under her guiding interpretation, she freely and joyfully puts part or the whole of it into their hands, that they may nourish their souls and grow thereby. We know that our blessed Lord came upon earth in a threefold character: as our Priest, to offer Himself in sacrifice for us; as our King, to found a kingdom which should never be removed; and also as our Prophet, to instruct us in the things of God. And ~~this threefold~~ *this threefold* character we believe Him to have bequeath

to the Church, His spouse and representative among men. She too offers her Lord in sacrifice; she too rules over us with royal sway; and she too instructs us in the sacred wisdom which He has revealed to her. "Go ye and teach all nations," was our Lord's commission to the Apostles, her first rulers; and this commission has never been rescinded; and in virtue of it the Church in the present day, as in the time of the Apostles, goes forth teaching all nations the things that belong to their peace; and in this her instruction her great text-book is, as it has ever been, Holy Scripture.

It must not be supposed, then, that the Church derived, in the first instance, from Scripture that which she is commissioned to impart to us; for the Apostles had preached the Gospel in almost all the lands then known, and thousands had been gathered into her bosom, before a single line of the New Testament was written; as a popular Protestant writer has well said, "The world did not believe because the Scriptures were written, but the Scriptures were written because the world believed." Indeed, we have but to look into the pages of the New Testament to see that it was not intended as a promulgation of the faith to those who had it not, but that it constantly presupposes that faith as already received. Thus, though the Church, and not the Bible, is the teacher commissioned by God, yet as Holy Scripture is a record made under the direct inspiration of the Spirit of God, and designed for the edification of the body of Christ, the Church has ever held it as most sacred, and has used it, as we have said, as her great text-book, making it, in every age, the centre of her whole circle of instruction, however comprehensive that may have been. Holy Scripture has ever been the theme on which the minds of her most gifted children have delighted to exercise themselves; upon this saints and doctors and fathers of the Church have concentrated all their powers, so that there is not a single line of it which has not been the subject of learned research and profound meditation, and scarcely a name among all the bright array of saints,—at least among those who were in any degree men of intellectual as well as spiritual attainments,—which is not appended

to a commentary on some portion or other of Holy Scripture. The Psalms alone have employed a series of great names, so long that it would be tedious to enumerate them, headed by St. Augustine and St. Ambrose. St. Gregory, the apostle of this country, even in the midst of the cares of his pontificate, found time to write a commentary on the book of Job, a book of homilies on the Gospels, and another on the Prophet Ezekiel. St. Bernard expounded the Canticle of Canticles; but it is idle to select individual names, when, as we have said, every holy father in turn has bequeathed to us the result of his meditations on one book or another; and every book, without exception, has had its commentator. And the rich fruits of these accumulated energies (the energies, let us remember, of more than eighteen centuries) are garnered up from age to age in the treasure-house of the Church; a store from whence to draw for the instruction of her children through all generations. Holy Scripture may, then, most truly be called the text-book of the Church; and now, as in times past, she labours zealously to impart to us the sacred wisdom it contains, not only by presenting to us the written word itself; not only by the direct teaching of her clergy, a body of men set apart and carefully trained for that office, but by her various ordinances, her rituals, her popular devotions, the practices she inculcates upon us, the examples she sets before us—indeed, we may say, by the whole course of her external and internal life, all which affords a living commentary on Scripture, such as he who runs may read.

With regard to her manner of dealing with the sacred text itself, we have spoken at sufficient length elsewhere; and moreover we are only concerned, on the present occasion, with those means of instruction in Scripture which are peculiar to Catholicism. The fact of setting apart a body of men whose especial duty it is to convey such instruction to the mass of the people, cannot fairly be considered as peculiar to ourselves, for Protestants also do the same. But there is a wide difference between the claims to attention presented by our teachers, and those which can be put forth by the teachers of any of the sects which have separated themselves from us, even considering the matter in its merely

man aspect. To help him in the interpretation of Scripture, a Protestant minister can enjoy but at best the results of a three hundred years' study of the Bible, seeing that, at the time of the so-called Reformation, men in becoming Protestants renounced as corrupt and untrustworthy the received interpretation of the Church. But, in point of fact, he cannot really enjoy even this benefit, since the exercise of his private judgment binds him as it were to start afresh; and if he reads the writings of his predecessors at all, yet he is certainly precluded from taking them as authorities. If he attempts to dive into antiquity, with the hope of discovering what was the teaching of the primitive Church, he will draw from thence only a few disjointed and fragmentary truths, which, as recent experience has proved, he will endeavour in vain to force into junction with the system to which he belongs, like one pouring new wine into old bottles, or joining new cloth to an old garment. The link between the present and the past is to be found in the Catholic Church alone; all who have left her have let the chain drop, and such as are sensible of the loss feel about in vain to recover it. They have left the path on which the light of a living tradition shines, and before their eyes the monuments of past ages lie wrapt in darkness and confusion. But the Catholic priest is trained, generally from his early childhood, in the full light of the Church's teaching, both written and unwritten; he is the inheritor of the sacred wisdom accumulated, as we have seen, during a course of more than eighteen centuries, and collected from almost every nation under heaven, which, in each succeeding age, as need required, has been condensed, sifted, digested, and rendered fit for use, each generation thus profiting by the labours of those who have preceded it, directed by the authoritative mind of the living Church. Then, as to his knowledge of the letter of Scripture, from the mere daily devotions which he is required to perform, a large portion of it must necessarily become familiar to him as household words; the *Psalter* especially must be continually upon his lips, till it can scarcely be otherwise than natural to him as the *breathings of his own heart*. Other parts, too, of the Old and New Testament, comprising, in fact, almost the whole of it,

he has thus to read in regular order, day after day, through his whole life. In the ages before printing was invented, and when books were consequently very scarce, and the lives of many priests, especially religious, were spent in transcribing them, this familiarity with Holy Scripture must have been even greater than it is now, and for this simple reason, that at that time, from the mere fact of books being scarce, much more use was made of the memory in education than now; large portions of Scripture, as well as of other books, were learnt by heart. Indeed, if we wish to see how entirely familiar with Holy Scripture the more educated men of those days really were, we have but to look into the correspondence which has come down to us, in various forms, between the men of letters, who were chiefly clergy; and we shall find that Scripture language had become quite their natural mode of expression, which they constantly used, not at all in the strained way of modern Puritans, but apparently without being conscious of it. The abundant supply of books in the present day has of course superseded the necessity of learning so much by heart; but still the selfsame daily devotions which the Church, in those days, required of her priesthood, she requires of them still, and from the performance of these nothing but strict necessity can dispense them. Of all the teachers of the various sects, who are so often (in ignorance, we believe) apt to declaim against the "unscriptural priesthood of Rome," it would be hard, we think, to find one whose voluntary reading of Scripture, from day to day, amounts in quantity to that which is of positive obligation to the Catholic Priest.

And how carefully the Church inculcates on her priests the temper and spirit in which they are to instruct their people, we may see if we turn to the Catechism of the Council of Trent, which is addressed especially to them: "Pastors must always remember," it is there said, "that all the knowledge of a Christian man is comprehended under this one head; or rather, as our Saviour Himself says, 'This is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.' Wherefore the labours of an ecclesiastical teacher should be chiefly directed to this object, that the faithful should ?

sire thoroughly to know Jesus Christ, and Him crucified ; and should be fully persuaded, and believe with the deepest inward piety and devotion of heart, that there is no other name under heaven given unto men whereby they may be saved ; for He is the propitiation for our sins. But, because by this we know that we have known Him, if we keep His commandments, it is next in order, and closely joined with what we have said, that the teacher should shew his people that life ought not to be passed by the faithful in sloth and vanity ; but that, even as He walked, so we should walk also, and should zealously follow justice, mercy, faithfulness, charity, gentleness ; for He gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself an acceptable people, following good works ; which things the Apostle commanded pastors to teach and exhort." They are further admonished to meditate on the word of God day and night, remembering the admonition of St. Paul, which, written originally to St. Timothy, all who have the care of souls are directed to consider as addressed to themselves : " Attend to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. All Scripture, divinely inspired, is useful to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work." They are charged further, to adapt their teaching to the wants of their people ; to feed some, according to the saying of the apostle St. Paul, with milk, as new-born babes in Christ, and others with strong meat ; to be careful and considerate in affording to each what his especial needs require, that so the little ones perish not for lack of one to administer bread to them, and they also who have their senses exercised find the spiritual food they need ; and not to be weary or fastidious because, being themselves used to the contemplation of sublime things, they are obliged to discourse to their hearers concerning first principles, remembering " that the very Wisdom of the Eternal Father came down upon earth, that, in the lowliness of our flesh, He might hand down to us the precepts of the heavenly life. Who would not, therefore, be constrained by the love of Christ to become as a little one in the midst of the brethren, and, even as a nurse, cherishing her children ?"

Thus carefully does the Church endeavour to instil into her pastors the true spirit of their calling as teachers of the faithful. But she does not leave us (as the unlearned of all communions out of her pale must necessarily be left, at least in great measure,) dependent for all our religious knowledge on the direct means of instruction, viz. teaching and preaching, important and indeed essential as these are; she impresses the same sacred knowledge on our minds by her holy ordinances and ceremonies, and other like means of various kinds, with which the greater or less capability of this or that individual priest has comparatively little or nothing to do.

It will help us to consider this part of our subject if we endeavour to realise in our own minds what the knowledge is with which Christians require to be furnished, and which Protestants profess to seek for in Holy Scripture. And here we cannot do better than adopt the classification suggested by the Catechism which we have already quoted, which gathers up all "the knowledge of a Christian man" under four principal heads, which she recommends to her pastors as the texts, so to speak, for their teaching, namely, the Apostles' Creed, the doctrine of the Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. "All that is included," it goes on to say, "in the discipline of the Christian faith, belonging either to the knowledge of God, or to His creation and government of the world, or to the redemption of the human race, or to the rewards of the good and the punishments of the wicked, are contained in the doctrine of the Creed. Those things which are signs and instruments, as it were, of obtaining Divine grace, are embraced under the doctrine of the Sacraments. All that belongs to the laws, the end of which is charity, may be treated of under the head of the Decalogue. Lastly, whatever may be wished for, hoped for, or sought by men for their good, is comprehended in the Lord's Prayer. Wherefore it follows that these four, which may be called the *commonplaces* of Holy Scripture, being duly explained, nothing will be lacking for the understanding of those things which must be learnt by a Christian man." Or, in other words, we must learn what we have to believe, a

what we have to do, symbolised respectively by the Creed and the Ten Commandments; and what means we are to use in order to be enabled thus to believe and thus to do, namely, the Sacraments and Prayer.

Now in the truths which come under these four general heads, the Church, by her own perpetual ordinance, furnishes us with abundant means of instruction, the heritage of every Catholic as such, though (it may be) bestowed in richer measure at one time and place than another, as circumstances are more or less favourable for the development of her inherent energies. To take the first, what we have to believe (which again may be subdivided into doctrines and facts, though these two are, in truth, quite inseparably interwoven); we contend that none out of the Church can command the means of attaining that distinct knowledge of the doctrines, and that vivid realisation of the facts of Scripture, which she offers to all her children with a liberal hand.

First, as to the doctrines contained in Holy Scripture: what these are is the question at issue, not only between the Church and the sects which have separated from her, but between those sects themselves. With these last, however, though there is endless disagreement on this subject, yet in one point they all agree, and it is this: that the system professed by each of them respectively is a theory, started for the most part in the first instance by an individual, and (which, indeed, is matter of boast to them) grounded on Holy Scripture itself, or at least on the view of it taken by that individual, and therefore not even pretending to throw on Scripture a light derived from any external source. But in this respect the Catholic Church stands entirely alone and on a vantage-ground, inasmuch as the system of doctrine which she imparts to her children was not, as we have already said, originally derived from Scripture, but came directly from Him by whom Scripture was inspired; so that it throws upon Scripture a strong *light, so to speak, from without.* Protestants of course *assert that our system of doctrine is false; but none would deny that, supposing it to be true, it would furnish a means of instruction in Scripture of a far superior character to*

any which a system professedly grounded on the study of its own pages alone could afford. Thus much too all must admit, that the Catholic system is one peculiarly clear and consistent with itself; and we cannot but think that any one carefully and impartially examining it, and comparing it with Scripture, would be constrained to admit further, that it is one which singularly harmonises therewith, which can look every single line of it in the face, and which throws light on many passages unintelligible without it. Not that this system, any more than any other, could be deduced from Scripture; but that, once received, it agrees with and explains Scripture; that it is to it as the clue to the labyrinth, or the key to the cypher. Now, in this system every Catholic is instructed from his very cradle; he learns it in creeds and catechisms, and more especially in the explanations of these which he receives, first from the lips of his mother, and afterwards of his pastor, until it is so wrought into the very structure of his mind, that he feels in after years as if the knowledge of these truths had been born with him. And however others may judge of them, he is convinced with a certainty which nothing can shake, that these alone enable him either to understand Holy Writ, or to apply it profitably to his own soul.

But the doctrines of the Gospel are, as we have said, interwoven with certain facts on which they repose, and the knowledge of which is therefore most needful to the Christian. Of these the chief are, of course, those included in the sacred life, passion, and death of our Blessed Lord; in His glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and in the early history of His Church: but there is scarcely an event recorded in any part of the Bible, whether in the Old or New Testament, which is not most important and interesting, because it is in some way connected with these. Now time and space would both fail us if we were to attempt to enumerate all the means which have ever been, and are now, employed by the Church for the purpose of impressing these on the memory of her children. To take one *single means* as an instance: the whole history of the *art of painting* in modern Europe, at least in its earlier de-

lopments, is a history of earnest labour on the part of the Church to this end. Even in the Catacombs—those dark-some vaults under the city of Rome, where the Christians were wont to meet in the ages of persecution, to celebrate the sacred rites of their holy religion—we find the walls adorned with paintings; rude indeed, because the Christians were not then, for the most part, of the wealthier and more cultivated classes, and also because they wrought in fear and haste, and under great disadvantages, but yet sufficiently expressive to imprint on the minds of the people those mysteries of Holy Writ which it was most necessary for them to know and to meditate upon in the midst of their bitter trials. In after times painting was employed yet more systematically for the instruction of the poor and ignorant. Thus the synod of Arras, in 1205, expressly declared “that painting was the book of the ignorant, who could read no other.” And any who have had the pleasure of visiting southern lands, where art especially flourished, have seen the walls of churches and convents, baptisteries and cemeteries, covered with beautiful fresco-paintings, as they are called, portraying the various events of Holy Writ, so as to catch the eye of the multitudes, who could not but learn those events, and the doctrines implied under them and illustrated by them, from these pictures, even more effectually in some respects than from reading. In these northern climates, where fresco-painting was not so much practised, the art of painting on glass was invented, and professedly employed for the same purpose. In the Church of St. Nizier at Troyes, there was formerly an inscription over the principal door declaring that a certain curé had caused three windows to be painted, “in order to serve as a catechism and instruction to the people.” In short, Holy Scripture was the one chief source of inspiration to the artists of those ages of faith; and the object they proposed to themselves in their labours, next to the offering up the work of their hands as a direct act of worship to Almighty God, was the instructing their brethren in the mysteries contained in Holy Writ; and so sacred did they esteem their calling, that of some, who were also monks, we read that, before beginning any new work, the

always prepared themselves by fasting and prayer. Even at the present day, when the more ready access to the sacred text itself may be supposed to render the aid of painting less indispensable, the Catholic Church, as we know, makes large use of pictures. There is not a child trained in a Catholic school who does not become possessed of at least some little cheap prints on holy subjects; and any one used to children well knows how easily any fact which they see represented in a picture not only fixes itself in their memory, but also lays hold of their imagination and affections. Our churches too, even in this country, where we are hampered by poverty, are almost always adorned with pictures of some sort or other; for as their object is instruction, indifferent ones are held to be better than none at all. The very crucifix, which is considered indispensable to every Catholic, is in itself an ever-open Bible.

Another means, still more impressive, which the Church employs for fixing in our minds these great facts, is her own ritual, her settled order of devotions, and the pious practices which she recommends. Thus in the daily sacrifice of the Mass, which is a renewal, after an unbloody manner, of the sacrifice on Calvary, the faithful are taught that one most acceptable way of assisting thereat is to make a meditation on the Passion. Then, thrice a day, the reciting of what is called the Angelus (a brief devotional recapitulation of the angelical salutation, our Blessed Lady's reply to it, and the mysterious event which ensued,) cannot but imprint on our minds the mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord; which, again, is brought vividly before us, in a special manner, twice every day in the course of the Mass, when we kneel during the recitation of the Creed, at the words, "and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man;" and at those other words in the last Gospel, "and the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us." Our popular devotions too are directed to the same end: the Rosary, for instance, which very many Catholics recite daily, involves a daily recurrence to the most prominent *mysteries of our faith*: on one day, when the joyful *mysteries are celebrated*, to the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Presentation in the Temple, and the Fir

ing of the child Jesus in the midst of the doctors ; on the next, to the sorrowful mysteries, the Agony in the Garden, the Scourging, the Crowning with Thorns, the Carrying of the Cross, and the Crucifixion ; and then to the glorious mysteries, the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Descent of the Holy Ghost, the Assumption of our Lady into Heaven, her Coronation, and the Glory of all the Saints ; all these, with the exception of the two last, being recorded in Holy Scripture. Then, again, the Devotion of the Stations, which is a very popular one, leads us in detail through fourteen stages of the Passion of our Blessed Lord. Indeed, the Church's whole yearly round of fast and festival is itself a living commentary on the Gospel of our Lord ; by it the facts of His sacred Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, and those connected with the foundation of His Church, all which form the main subject-matter of the New Testament Scriptures, are brought before us in turn, and in a way much more calculated to impress them deeply on our minds than in the mere reading the record of them in a book ; though, in truth, the fast or festival is almost always accompanied by the public reading and expounding by the priest of the portion of Scripture which refers to the event it celebrates. Surely the forty days of Lent, bringing with them, as they do, the dark-coloured vestments, the saddened ritual, and more especially the practical accompaniment of bodily mortification, must imprint on our memory the real fact of our Lord's fasting in the wilderness and its signification, to a degree which could not be effected by the mere reading of the Gospel narrative without such lively comment. So also the intensity of the Church's mourning in Holy Week, prepared for, as it always is, during the weeks of Lent, by preaching or careful explanation of some sort ; and then the Paschal gladness which succeeds it, are a translation, so to speak, of the words of Holy Writ into life and action, and make the events they record, as it were, *present* before us, and acted under our very eyes.

These instances, which are but a few out of very many which might be adduced, are sufficient to shew how amply the Church has provided for our instruction in that portion of Scripture which contains the truths we have to believe

And she is no less careful in instructing us in that which contains the laws we have to obey; the system which we are taught in her catechisms, and which her pastors expound to us, embraces morals as well as faith; and the principles of morals, as they regard every one of us, are brought down to our own immediate comprehension, and applied to our own peculiar needs, by that ordinance of the Church to which our enemies most object, namely confession. By means of this, every question our consciences suggest may be answered, every doubt as to our own individual duty solved, and every needful means suggested to us for our improvement in holiness. The Church speaks to us with no uncertain sound in morals any more than in faith; she teaches us what is of precept, and what of counsel; that is, what virtues are strictly obligatory upon all, and what are required only of those who aspire to perfection; in short, she is to us the living interpreter of the laws contained in Holy Scripture. And she does more than interpret them for us; she furnishes us with examples of strict obedience to them, and with means of obeying them ourselves, according to our respective callings and the degrees of grace given us. Every saint whose history the Church records for our admiration and imitation is in himself a commentary on the precepts and counsels given by our Lord, and also a copy, to a certain extent, of His sacred life. "Be ye followers of me," says St. Paul, "as I also am of Christ." Now this commemoration of the saints and study of their lives is almost unknown out of the Church; but those within her blessed pale know well how much light is thrown by such commemoration and study upon the law of God contained in His inspired book. Each of the Beatitudes, for instance, spoken by our Lord in his Sermon on the Mount, has been, in its turn, the fruitful germ of kindred virtue in the breast of some holy and highly-gifted soul, who has cherished and cultivated it to the uttermost, and often bequeathed the cultivation of it to some holy institute which has borne his name. Thus the words, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit,*" may be said to *have engendered* the character of St. Francis and that of *the religious order which he founded, the peculiar spir*

of both being an intense realisation of this blessing. In fact, all religious communities, so far as they keep alive within them the spirit of their institute, are in themselves a practical exposition of some portion of the moral teaching of the Gospel ; some especially devote themselves to the practice of active charity, some of divine contemplation, some of holy mourning ; but all are like a bright halo gathered round some one luminous point, that point being a text of Holy Writ.

Then, again, in the two last of the four great heads under which, as we have said, all scriptural instruction may be included, namely, the Sacraments and Prayer, the Church provides us, we need scarcely say it, with an inexhaustible treasure of instruction. As to the doctrine of the Sacraments, there is not a child in a Catholic country who is not instructed in it, or who has not the opportunity of becoming so, to the fullest amount his necessities can require ; while, at the same time, the depth and beauty of the subject are inexhaustible, offering the more food for thought, the more earnestly the mind dwells upon them. Here too we feel the blessing of the Church's distinct and authoritative teaching, and also of its exact harmony with Scripture. We are not left to doubt what blessing our babes have received at their baptism, or whether they have received any ; we are not told that the saying of our Lord, that we must be born of water and of the spirit, if we would enter the kingdom of heaven, is a hard saying and of doubtful meaning, so that some divines expound it one way, some another. We know what we believe and what we have to expect, and take the sacred words of our Lord fearlessly and in their very letter. So, again, as to the Sacrament of Penance ; it surely furnishes the only satisfactory explanation of our Lord's saying to His Apostles, " Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven ; whose sins you retain, they are retained." This, again, we take in its literal sense ; *and the sacred words and the Church's practice mutually expound and corroborate each other.* We might in like manner go through all the Sacraments ; but our space prevents us. We will only allude to that greatest of them all, in which we receive the Body and Blood of our Lord

Surely here the Catholic belief affords the only possible interpretation of the portions of Holy Scripture which relate to the subject ; for all others are not an interpretation at all, but a simple putting aside. What other belief, for instance, leaves any thing like a satisfactory meaning, we will not say to our Lord's declaration, This is My body (for that of course *might* be figurative, if the context favoured the idea of its being so), but to the sixth chapter of St. John? in which the Catholic doctrine is conveyed again and again in words as explicit, it would seem, as any that could be chosen. In short, the whole teaching of the Church on this great subject of the Sacraments is an instruction in Scripture, an instruction of the most interesting character and the greatest practical utility.

Prayer is the last topic on which we shall touch, and it must be briefly. On this subject, above all others, instruction is needed ; for prayer is the very breathing of the Christian soul, without which the spiritual life cannot be kept up ; and, being a duty of such infinite importance, it is most needful to learn how it can be most acceptably performed. Now, on this subject the instructions afforded by the Church are inexhaustible ; they are of all measures, and fitted for all spiritual statures, from the little, simple notices afforded in the Catechism for children and such as are like children in these matters, to the deep mystical treatises written by ascetics and contemplatives for such as aspire to follow in their track. Prayer, in the Catholic Church, may be as systematically studied as any science of this world has ever been by its most earnest votaries, or rather much more so ; for more in number, and more various in their birth and country and circumstances, have been the students of this science than of any other ; and the fruit of their labours abides for our benefit, that we may take of it according to our degree and our needs. Even the simplest among us are taught somewhat scientifically in this matter ; for instance, we all know what is vocal and what mental prayer, and what devotions combine the two ; what manner of prayer is best suited for the various occasions which ordinarily present themselves : thus an offering up of the *de-*
is the prayer prescribed for our first awaking ; an act

contrition, for the close of day; and of preparation for death, as our last at night. We are taught also how to make every action of the day a prayer, and various other matters too long here to enumerate, but of great personal concernment and utility to every one of us. But last of all, and crowning every other manner of instruction on all these various subjects, comes the practice inculcated by the Church on all her children who desire to lead holy lives, of daily meditation. She desires to impress on our minds not merely the abstract doctrines and external facts of the Gospel, but to teach us how to penetrate into their hidden marrow and spirit. And this she does both by the almost countless multitude of spiritual books, grounded on various parts of Scripture, which she offers us; and also, and more especially, by this practice of meditation, the adoption of which we are taught is the first and most important step in the spiritual life. To this duty we are recommended to give daily the first hour we can command in the morning, that we may come to it with our thoughts fresh and our energies unbroken; we are directed to persevere in it for a specific portion of time, say half an hour, or less for beginners and such as have no leisure, and to allow nothing but absolute necessity to interrupt it. This is, in fact, the main duty of our day; and if this is well performed, the others, we may hope, following in their regular course, will be well performed also. Now, of this meditation, which is made such a point of in Catholic life, the subject-matter is almost always taken from Holy Scripture; every action of our Blessed Lord which is there recorded, every sacred word He spoke, every pang He suffered (so far as mortal mind can grasp these things), has been in turn the theme of intense, adoring contemplation; the seven wounds, the seven last words on the cross, the seven outpourings of His sacred blood, the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer, His miracles, His parables, His calling of His Apostles, every clause in His sermon on the Mount, have been dwelt on in turn *with an earnestness which would have drained them of their meaning if it were not unfathomable because divine. Many saints have spent almost their entire lives, we may say in meditation on these inexhaustible subjects; and of*

the result of these meditations has been preserved and handed down by the Church for the assistance of her feeblers children.

Meditation, we have said, is recommended to us as a daily practice ; but we are further recommended to devote ourselves to it at certain times and seasons with especial fervour. We are advised sometimes to enter into what is called a retreat ; that is, to lay aside for awhile all the cares of the world, to subject ourselves to a rule of solitude and silence, and to pursue a course of meditations on a regular series of subjects which are laid down for us, and proposed and expounded to us in turn from day to day. Public retreats of a similar kind, or missions as they are called, are given from time to time for the benefit of the mass of the people, who have not the opportunity of retiring into religious houses for the purpose. These spiritual exercises embrace the most important truths contained in Holy Scripture : first, the end of our being, the right use of creatures towards the fulfilment of that end, the disturbing force which tends to move us from it, and the means of repelling that force ; then the Master whom we are called to obey is brought before our minds ; we are led through every stage of His blessed life, passion, and death ; then we are taught to rejoice in His glorious resurrection ; and finally, to rise to the contemplation of the love of God, the one great absorbing truth which breathes through every page of Scripture, and in which all others begin and end.

This has been but a brief and hurried sketch of the various means employed by the Church to instruct her children in the wisdom of God, of which His holy book is the great treasure-house ; and we defy any of the sects which have torn themselves from her to supply their followers with helps at all approaching to these, either in number or efficiency. In truth, however others may cavil and dispute, Catholics know and feel that Holy Scripture is the peculiar heritage of the Church ; the Church alone has preserved it, she alone bears witness to its inspiration, she alone has the key to its true meaning, and she alone knows how to dispense it to us according to our needs, and

to instruct us aright in all that sacred wisdom which forms the subject-matter of its pages. Those who have grown up out of her pale, and have returned to it in mature age and with developed faculties, have felt that of all the blessings she has bestowed upon them, this of a true knowledge and right understanding of Holy Scripture is not the least. The identity of the present living Church with that of which the New Testament recounts the infant struggles, strikes home upon the heart and mind of a convert with a force not to be described. "I seem," said one convert, "to have been transplanted into the Acts of the Apostles." "Ever since I have been a Catholic," said another, "every line of Scripture has seemed to me like a letter from home." Would that any thing that has been written in this series of Tracts on the various relations between the Church and Holy Scripture, of which this is the conclusion, could induce any single individual to make trial for himself in this matter; to investigate the subject with real care and impartiality; to sift the grounds of his own belief, and examine the authority which supports ours; and, more especially, to look into some of the practical and devotional works on Holy Scripture in which the Catholic Church so richly abounds, and try whether they do not throw on the sacred text a light so pure, so beautiful, so unmistakeably true, as to bear witness to the presence in the Church of the same Holy Spirit by which that sacred text was inspired.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY ROBSON, LEVET, AND FRANKLYN,
Great New Street and Better Lane.

Library of Christian Doctrine.

rites and ceremonies.

III.

THE THEOLOGICAL USE OF CEREMONIAL.



By Permission.

LONDON:
BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.
READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

]

1852.

[Price 1d.

Rites and Ceremonies.

III. THE THEOLOGICAL USE OF CEREMONIAL.

IN a former Number of this Series, a few remarks were made on a matter which has perhaps hardly been so much considered by Catholics as it deserves—the *rationale*, as it may be called, of Church Ceremonies. Wholly inadequate as those remarks were to a subject upon which a volume might be employed with advantage, they may at least have served the purpose of shewing that the ceremonial system of the Church is not what the more fair-minded among Protestants are apt to suppose it, and what some Catholics perhaps have been inclined to accept as its true description, namely, a provision of which the sole or chief object is to secure respect for religion among external observers ; still less, that it is what more superficial or ill-disposed persons have sometimes pronounced it, an arrangement framed to attract the senses of men by an appeal to a childish love of pageantry. It is hoped that, on the contrary, no thoughtful person will have perused with attention the two Tracts upon Ceremonies which have appeared in this Series,—the one upon their reasonableness, the other upon their substantial use,*—without approaching to the conclusion that a provision so ancient, so elaborate, and so expressive, has its foundation in some deeper principle than that of drawing heretics to our churches, or affecting a competition with the splendours of the court or the scenic illusions of the stage. It may be well briefly to recapitulate the argument of the former Tracts, if it be only for the purpose of shew-

* See No. 22, “ The Reasonableness of Religious Ceremonial ;” No. 32, “ The Ceremonial of the Church not theatrical.”

ing that it is strong enough to admit of being well handled and exhibited in various points of view.

The vindication of Church ceremonial was grounded partly upon the nature of the Supreme Being, who is the Object of all worship, and partly upon the nature of man, who is to be engaged in His service. In their relation to Almighty God, the ceremonies of the Church were shewn to form the best method of expressing the sentiments of homage and affection which should enter into the various acts of religious worship. It was argued that carelessness in externals is usually the token of disrespect and indifference; on the other hand, that a deep and exuberant affection is naturally, and according to all experience, not merely sedulous, but studious, of forms, even down to that ultimate development or scientific refinement of them which goes by the name of punctilio or etiquette.

The primary reason and obligation of ceremonial are founded in the claims of Almighty God upon our respect and affection; insomuch that its necessity would exist independently altogether of the presence of any worshippers excepting those immediately engaged in the celebration of the Holy Mysteries or other religious office. This appears, as from many other considerations, so especially from this, that every priest is bound in conscience, under the most solemn obligations, to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice with precisely the same care and attention to minutiae, whether he say Mass in his private oratory, in the presence of his attendant server alone, or solemnise it in the presence of thousands in the most magnificent and spacious cathedral. It appears also from the circumstance of a great portion of the ceremonies in every Mass being gone through out of sight of the people. The same conclusion was argued also from the nature of the ceremonies themselves, which, as all experience shews, have no attraction *per se*, excepting so far as they are connected with the idea of reverence and affection. If *effect* alone were the object of the ceremonial of the Church, the ceremonies would be more conspicuous, more studiously graceful, more elaborately impressive; the dresses more elegant in shape, the tout ensemble more picturesque. It is very true, as has already been of

served, that the result, especially where Mass is celebrated with solemnity, is beautiful and attractive; but this does not come of aiming at effect, of studying movements, of arranging groups, and the like. No object is kept in view but that of observing rubrics. These rubrics propose nothing but the most correct performance of the work itself. It is just the same in the world of nature. Analyse a beautiful prospect, and of what does it consist? of trees, of mountains, of rivers, of fields, and the like. Each of its parts has its own place and object in creation. The water is for refreshment, the trees for shelter, the land for produce, the golden corn which covers it for the nourishment of man. What we call the beautiful or the picturesque is derived from some purely accidental correspondence between these objects in their form or in their combination, and some perceptive faculty in our own minds, how far natural, and how far the result of cultivation, or dependent upon association and memory, needs not here to be determined.

The Church, like her Divine Author, is directly practical in all her operations. She aims at doing what is to be done in the most direct and effectual way, and at nothing more. Her ceremonial, when taken to pieces, what is it? Not a dissected map or picture, the components of which have no independent use or meaning, but require to be united in order that their purpose may be discovered, but a collection of details each of which is perfectly adapted to its own object, and has an individual completeness and use over and above its bearing upon the rest. These details of ceremonial are like the elements in a landscape; each genuflection, inclination, motion of the hands, &c., has its proper end, which it fulfils in itself, whether that end be to express a doctrine or to secure a disposition.

The second, and altogether secondary use of religious ceremonial is founded in the imperfection of human nature, which is incapable of sustained devotion without external *helps*, and for the relief of which Almighty God has furnished the corporal senses to be the inlets of all holy impressions to the soul. Of these senses, the most powerful in its influence upon the mind and heart is proverbially

the eye. Now, under this part of the subject is not to be included merely the general idea of propriety and solemnity becoming an act of religious worship (which a collection of ceremonies has doubtless a tendency to create, and which in itself is an end highly desirable), but rather the inculcation of certain religious truths, such as may be taught indeed orally or by means of books, but which can scarcely be engrafted on the mind and lodged deeply in the heart without being constantly brought before the eyes as the subject of certain actions. To impress these truths upon the minds of others is one object of religious ceremonial; another is, to secure by means of them certain dispositions towards the objects of worship. As the spirit of loyalty is kept up in the kingdoms of this world by those forms of respect which are seen to be practised towards great personages in public, so is the reverence and love of the Blessed Trinity maintained among faithful Christians by the outward signs of both in the ceremonies of holy Church. Leaving, however, this topic, which is almost too obvious to need any elucidation, we shall return to the theological use of ceremonial, and devote the sequel of the present Tract entirely to that subject.

It has pleased Almighty God to ordain certain material channels for the conveyance of His special graces to the soul, and it is for His Church to see that the external conditions upon which, by His appointment, these blessings are made to depend, are fulfilled to the letter. This end can be accomplished only, as far as we can see, by means of a carefully constructed and jealously guarded ceremonial. The Sacraments must not be risked upon the chances of individual devotion. The Church takes them altogether into her own keeping, and secures the right administration of them by furnishing every possible protection against human negligence. This obviously the Church cannot do without a collection of ceremonial arrangements, which seems cumbrous, and is actually very elaborate. Protestants, who do not appreciate sacramental religion, and Catholics, who, although they value it in its results, do not philosophise upon its principles, will be at a loss to account for what appears like a needless expenditure of time

and care. But a deeper reflection than men of the world can ordinarily give to such matters will justify the holy pertinacity with which the Church has clung to these arrangements, reckless altogether of the popularity which she might have purchased to herself by a sacrifice of her strictness in this respect.

Hence it is that, in the first place, the Church imposes the most stringent obligation upon her priests and ministers with respect to those ceremonies which appertain directly to the essence of the Sacraments. The actual contact with the person, of the water in holy Baptism, and of the holy chrism and oil of the sick at Confirmation and Extreme Unction, the simultaneous use of matter and form in the Sacraments, and in all cases the correct enunciation of the words which constitute their form,—these are prescriptions which bind the consciences of priests under penalty of deadly sin. But it is where the Church addresses herself to the discharge of her greatest and most characteristic responsibility, as the agent by whom the Eternal Son of God makes Himself present on the altar, that she is the most exuberant in the manifestations of her reverential care, and the most exacting in her ceremonial requirements. In Sacraments which, however salutary, and however necessary, are less august in their nature than that by which the Eternal imparts, not His gifts but Himself, to His creatures, the Church is ready to yield, under the pressure of any urgent cause, such portions of her ceremonial as do not belong to the essence of the rite. Thus it is that in holy Baptism, for example, she readily dispenses, in case of necessity, with every unessential adjunct; that in Extreme Unction she is satisfied, under the same urgent circumstances, with the anointing of one sense for all; and that in holy Matrimony, for a far less urgent reason than in the two former cases, she is prepared to reduce the ceremonial circumstances of the rite to the mere expression of mutual consent between the contracting parties. But two Sacraments there are, the one bearing directly upon the sacerdotal office, the other constituting the subject of its exercise, in regard to which the Church never dispenses with the full complement of cere-

monies, except in cases of absolute impossibility, and then, of course, with such alone as fall within the province of the dispensing power.* These are Holy Orders and the Blessed Eucharist.

We will endeavour to illustrate this theological use of ceremonies from the offices of Ordination and the holy Mass.

The essence of the priesthood is the power of offering the great Christian Sacrifice. As the Church, then, provides with the utmost possible care for the completeness of the sacrificial offering itself, she uses every precaution also to secure the validity of the acts by which her priests are made capable of their lofty function. It is not all at once that a son of the Church is consecrated to the service of the altar; but he attains his high dignity by steps, each of which brings him nearer to the sacerdotal office, although the essence of the priesthood is wrapped up in the last of them alone. But the dependence of the final consecration upon these preparatory approaches is such, that a flaw in one of them might involve either the ordained or ordaining parties in the greatest ecclesiastical embarrassment; and should it happen that the error were committed in the ordination to the priesthood, it is hardly possible to give a just idea of the mischief and distress which must ensue. But as we are here engaged in shewing the importance of a strict attention to the ceremonial regulations of the Church, an attempt shall be made to describe the consequences of any such flaw in the ordination of a priest as would affect the validity of his orders. In the first place, every one of the official acts of a priest thus invalidly ordained would by consequence be invalidated. His consecrations would be without effect, his sacrifices without value, his absolutions a mere dead letter. The bread and wine which were subjected to his invalid consecration would remain (as the Protestants say they always do) "in their own natural substances;" they would impart no divine gift to such as should communicate of them, and every act of adoration paid them

* Thus, for instance, in the Ordination of Priests and Consecration of Bishops, the Church, in pagan or heretical countries, is satisfied with less than the prescribed number of bishops or priests assisting.

providing for the purity of the matter which, by consecration, is made the Blood of our Lord.

When the integrity of the matter is duly secured, the priest must apply himself to the exact performance of the sacred ceremonies. Those which precede the offertory, having but a remoter bearing upon the Sacrifice itself, are of a less stringent obligation, and come under that general law of reverence and religious propriety which provides for the due administration of every even subordinate part of a rite so solemn in its purport. But from the offertory to the priests' communion, the rubrics have a more immediate relation to the act of sacrifice, and are consequently of the most paramount necessity. First, the Host is formally offered to Almighty God; here the priest must be careful to say the prescribed words with devout attention. Then the chalice has to be prepared by the infusion of the proper quantity of wine and water. The priest (or his minister) is bound, under pain of mortal sin, to mingle water with the wine, but in a proportion so small as not to destroy the substance of the wine. Then the chalice, so replenished, is offered in the same manner as previously the Host. Then the priest continues the prayers of oblation, washes his fingers as well in token of the purity required in so awful a Sacrifice, as out of respect to the Blessed Sacrament which he is about to handle; then he returns to the middle of the altar, says another prayer of oblation, and invites the prayers of those who assist. Then follow the secret prayers, which have also a bearing upon the Sacrifice; then the Preface, in which he calls on the great company of heaven to witness and join in the Sacrifice. At each step of approach to the consecration, the solemnity of the function increases. When the Canon of the Mass has once begun, the priest enters, as it were, into the holy of holies, and is to be wholly absorbed in what he is doing. It is then that he makes remembrance of the living, and of all intentions *most special* to himself. At length he comes to the words *of consecration*, none of which may be omitted without mortal sin, and some of which could not be omitted without invalidating the act. The same obligation applies to *all the ceremonies* between the consecration and commun-

of the priest, which latter act consummates the Sacrifice. And so careful is the Church about the integrity of the rite, that she provides, in her rubrics, with the most provident circumspection, against every contingency which could possibly affect it. Even her all but inflexible law, that the holy Communion should never (except in the case of the dying) be received after common food on the same day, she relaxes in this one instance; not only allowing but enjoining that, should the celebrant be incapacitated by illness from completing the Mass, or should he die in the act of celebrating, his place should be taken by another priest who is not required to have fasted from midnight. The same rubrics which provide for this contingency, exhibit a like forethought of others by which the holy Sacrifice might be impaired, or shorn of the respect which is due to it. One of them is especially remarkable. It supposes the possibility of the sacred Host disappearing, as in other ways, so *by miracle*. This shews how naturally (we may say) the Church thinks of the supernatural; how different from that of the world is her experience whereon her laws are founded, since even miraculous interpositions are incorporated in the body of her sacred "precedents."

After having stated thus fully and explicitly the importance which attaches to ceremonial accuracy in the administration of Sacraments, and especially those in which many persons are interested, it seems right to meet an objection which is often urged by Protestants against the Catholic Church, founded upon this liability to error, which we have freely admitted, and which is, of course, incidental to the very nature of a sacramental system. It is said, then, How can Catholics be *sure* that they are receiving true Sacraments, or exercising faith on proper objects, when the validity of priestly acts is dependent upon so vast a number of contingencies, a failure in any one of which may, as you tell us, be fatal to such validity?

This is an objection which must not be got rid of by denying the possibility of the case which it supposes, but by shewing, in the first place, how many are the safeguards by which the Church protects her members against error;

and, in the second, by weighing the precise amount disadvantage which is involved in the case supposed.

First, then, the whole argument of the present will go to prove, that just in the degree of the evil the objection before us contemplates, is the amount care which the Church takes to prevent it. More she not do than to bind not only her ministers, but all w engaged in the ceremonies essential to her Sacra under the heaviest obligations of conscience, as well the severest sanctions of law, to execute with fidel precision the great trust which she imposes upon the an ordination, for example, there is not only the offi bishop, but several priests, besides subordinate mir all of whom are scientifically acquainted with the r ments of the rite, and sensitively alive to the impc of ceremonial exactitude. These are all obliged | Church to secure the ceremonial, not merely against but even against suspicion ; so that a reasonable do to any of the essential parts would demand a cond reiteration of the defective Sacrament, as imperativ a convicted error would require it to be repeated w such condition. And what is true especially of ordi (the effects of which are so remote and so multifo true, in measure, of every single act of offering th Sacrifice, the importance of which is limited to the instance.

But, secondly, in speaking of the ill consequen a possible accident, we must take care to state preci what they consist. Protestants are generally but alive to the difference between *formal* and merely *m* evil. The Catholic Church holds that it is right, sacrifice, to prevent even the latter ; but it should be that there is the whole difference, as far as the sub: the evil is concerned, between a wilful error and one is suffered (rather than committed) in good faith. I tants, for instance, remind us that, through some p *flaw in things* pertaining to the essence of the ordinar *consecration* in a particular Mass may be invalidate *the faithful* assisting at it be consequently involve

act of idolatry. We must needs admit the possibility; but we must also define the extent of the evil. If it imply fault any where, that fault is of the gravest kind, since it indicates neglect in a primary duty of religion. And whether it involve fault, or accident merely, it is an evil to have brought about what is only in itself, and independently of any moral fault at all, an act at variance with the honour of Almighty God. But here the mischief ends. Almighty God, we know, will never punish an act in which the will has no part; still less will He punish such as in themselves (*formally*, as theologians say) are acts of virtue, though, in the particular case, misplaced. Rather, Almighty God will surely deal with such acts according to the intention, and no wise according to the error. Should it happen, then, that one who exercised the office of a priest had never been baptised, and had consequently been invalidly ordained, no Catholic doubts that at the Day of Judgment he will be dealt with as a priest, whether for good or evil, whatever sins more or less (if any), may have been involved in the circumstance to which his ordination owes its invalidity; while the faithful, again, who have been unconsciously subjected to his invalid ministrations, will equally be held responsible for their use or neglect of them.

Surely such a doctrine appeals, as do all the directions of holy Church when rightly understood, to reason and common sense. It is easy enough to get over the difficulties which are contained in it by impugning Sacraments altogether; but the sacramental form of religion being once allowed (and we are here arguing, not with those who deny but with those who admit it, while they refuse to allow its plain consequences), these difficulties must not stand in the way of such conditions as a sacramental theory obviously involves. Nor can we feel that, where the doctrine of the Church is understood *in its integrity*, they will be considered even to raise a question, far less constitute an obstacle. The necessity of sacramental religion is a preliminary inquiry on which we are here offering no assistance. Our argument is intended merely to shew, that the stress which the Catholic Church lays upon ceremonial, is the natural result of insisting, as she does, upon the necessity

of the Sacraments ; and that the inconvenience which may incidentally follow upon the stringency of her ceremonial provisions, as bearing upon the Sacraments, is no objection to those provisions, because nowise at variance with the essential principles of religion and morality.

Enough will perhaps have been said to justify the position with which we started, that the *security of Sacrament* is a principal reason for the exactitude with which the Church requires that her ceremonies shall be studied and observed. And this is one among many arguments to prove how mistaken the men of this world, wise as they fancy themselves, are, when they apply to the Catholic Church the rules of criticism which serve them in ordinary matters. Foolish and frivolous they may think it to manifest so much anxious care of the Sacraments whereof our Lord has entrusted His Church with the dispensation ; that is another question, which we are not discussing with them. But, if it be granted that the Sacraments are worth preserving (and thus much will surely be granted by many objectors to our ceremonial system), we do not see how the end in view can be attained except by arrangements as precise and as binding as our own.

If our Lord has been pleased to appoint certain method for the conveyance of His special graces to His people, it is not for us to admit even the slightest departure from prescribed forms. No objection can reasonably be made against the details which does not also apply to the substance of sacramental religion. If once we allow innovations in particulars, there seems no reason why we should stop short of infringing our Lord's command altogether ; for every formal act consists in details more or less essential to its integrity. For example, our Lord took bread and blessed it, and said "This is My Body." What is "taking" ? What is "bread" ? What is "blessing" it ? Each point must be gone through, or our Lord's practice is not followed. How essential this or that detail may be, we can *not always* precisely determine ; the only means of avoiding questions is to be alike and equally particular about all.

And, moreover, there is something which is surely very repugnant to piety in treating with disrespect and in

ference those treasures which our Lord, of His own free bounty, has entrusted us withal. Who are we—who are His priests—that we should deserve to be charged with the custody of His sacred body? Why does He leave it with us but because He trusts that we will guard it with fidelity? What can we give Him in return, if we give Him not our loving duty? It is the only warrant of His confidence; it is the only exchange we can offer for His immense bounty. The example for His priests, entrusted with the keeping of the Adorable Sacrament, is surely that of St. Joseph of Arimathea, who “wrapped the body of the Lord in fair white linen, and laid it in his own new tomb.”

But far greater than his is the privilege of the Catholic priest. Not only is he invested, like St. Joseph of Arimathea, with the custody of his Lord's body, and, like the other and still more favoured St. Joseph, made to be “lord of His house and ruler over His possession;” but his prerogative is like to Hers through whom God was pleased to manifest Himself in the form of humility to His creatures. It is the priest's great office and responsibility to make God present on the altar by the words of consecration, so that, in a manner, the Almighty may be said to subject Himself to the will of His priests as He did to that of His blessed Mother. For not merely has He gifted them with a marvellous power of evoking Him into visible manifestation of Himself, but He has made the times and durations of His appearances to depend upon their will. This is a trust so momentous, that a priest may well desire some better protection than his own vigilance against the danger in which he stands of misusing it. Such safeguard is provided in the ceremonial of the Church, which is Almighty God's own ordained provision for the respect which is due to Himself. A subject who goes into the presence of his sovereign knows that if he do but comply with the official regulations of the court, he is safe from all risk of reproach. To these official rules his own private notions of propriety must, of course, give place; and he will be the most loving liegeman who performs all that is required of him, *down to the very least particular, with the most exact and punctilious fidelity.*

Among the uses, therefore, of religious ceremonial, it must not be forgotten its effect upon the priests and ministers of religion. It acts as a perpetual reminder to them of truths which it denotes, and of which, without such external help, they would be constantly in danger of losing sight. Thus it is that the very arrangements which ignorant and superficial persons are apt to charge with formality, are in fact the very means of preventing the worship of Almighty God, as far as human means can prevent it, from passing into an empty and formal service. For they are the direct means of maintaining a conspicuous testimony to the heavenly doctrine which is the very life and soul of external religion, and are as necessary, in their way, to its preservation as creeds and sacraments themselves. For they do but involve a further application of the principle upon which even creeds and sacraments are founded, in the helps, furnished by God Himself to His Church, of impressing divine truth upon the soul through the medium of those bodily organs or mental faculties by which He has ordained that our spiritual being shall be approached and sustained.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY LEVY, ROBSON, AND FRANKLIN,
Great New Street and Fetter Lane.

Library of Christian Doctrine.

PROTESTANTISM WEIGHED

IN ITS OWN BALANCE,

AND FOUND WANTING.

No. VII.

PURGATORY.



By Permission.

LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

Protestantism weighed.

VII. PURGATORY.

THE Catholic doctrine concerning Purgatory may be stated thus: that Almighty God has appointed in the world a third place, which is neither heaven nor hell, a *middle* place, as it is called, in which certain souls will in the end go to heaven, are for awhile detained; we believe that some souls, the souls of little children, and of those who have been made members of Christ's Church by holy Baptism; or of others who, by God's grace, have been enabled to preserve through life the purity and innocence of children; or of others, again, who, by the same grace, have, by their sufferings or acts of voluntary penance, satisfied God's justice for the *temporal* punishment due for the sins of their *past* life,—are received by Almighty God, as soon as they have left the body, in enjoyment of everlasting bliss. In like manner, we believe that there are other souls which pass at once out of this world into the realms of everlasting torment in hell. But we believe also that there are many others who, although not destined to receive eternal punishment, yet not fit for immediate admission into that place which "there shall not enter any thing that is defiled" (Apoc. xxi. 27). For when we consider the carelessness of the majority of men, their want of rigid self-examination and blindness to their own faults, we can readily understand how the multitude of ordinary good persons commit a thousand sins—not indeed grievous sins, yet for which they shall have to "render an account on the day of judgment," such as "idle words," for example (Matt. xii. 36)—for which they never feel compunction, nor ask forgiveness of God. Concerning many souls

fore, although we dare not hope that, at the moment of their passage out of this world, they are so free from all spot and stain of sin as to be ready to pass immediately into the presence of that Being who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, there to dwell with Him at once and for ever; yet we feel confident that they have departed in the grace and favour of God, and that their everlasting lot therefore will not be cast among liars, and blasphemers, and idolators, "in the pool of fire, there to be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Apoc. xx. 10). And we believe that the mercy and justice of God, in His dealings with these souls, are reconciled by their being detained for a certain time in a middle place, there to be punished and purified, and dealt with according to His good pleasure, until He sees fit to admit them to the enjoyment of that beatific vision which is life and bliss everlasting.

It is also a part of Catholic belief that even when Almighty God has forgiven sin and justified the repentant sinner, so that he is once more in a state of grace, He still reserves the infliction of some degree of punishment for his transgressions, as we see in the instance of the royal penitent David. At the very same moment that he was assured by the mouth of the prophet that his sin was forgiven, "the Lord hath taken away thy sin," he was also told that he would yet suffer a certain punishment for that sin; "nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing the child that is born to thee shall surely die" (2 Kings xii. 14). Again, some time afterwards, when the same David had sinned by vanity and pride in numbering the people of Israel, no sooner had he done so than "his heart struck him;" he confessed that he had "sinned very much in what he had done," and he prayed God that He would "take away his iniquity" (2 Kings xxiv. 10); and no one doubts but that the Lord heard this prayer, and forgave the sin; nevertheless, He sent a very severe punishment for it both upon the king and upon his people. We believe, then, that this is God's law in dealing with the children of men; that when, *for Christ's sake*, He forgives sin, and absolves the sinner from its guilt and the eternal punishment which was its

due, He yet reserves some smaller punishments to be undergone by the sinner, either in this world or in the next; and thus that souls which leave this world in a state of grace and friendship with God, may yet be detained for a certain time from the enjoyment of their everlasting reward, because they have not yet paid this debt of temporal punishment due to their sins. And when we speak of souls being *purified* by the sufferings of Purgatory, we mean, not that they are thus cleansed from the *guilt* of their sins, but only that they are paying this debt of punishment. For no mere suffering can ever take away sin; true contrition and change of heart alone can effect this through the merits of Jesus Christ. No sin, however small, is forgiven without repentance; those souls, then, who leave this life with venial sins unrepented of, obtain the remission of the guilt of them by the first act of contrition and love which they make on their separation from the body. But since that act is the effect of the pure bounty of God, and is not performed in a state of probation, it is just that they should suffer for their neglect in not repenting before death.

This, then, is the Catholic doctrine about Purgatory, which we have not attempted to *prove* to you, but simply to state; and if you ask on what authority we believe this doctrine, we must answer, on the same authority on which we believe all the other articles of the Christian faith, viz. on the authority of the Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth," which was divinely commissioned to teach the faith to all nations, and has from the beginning taught this doctrine about Purgatory among the rest. In the following pages, however, we are not going to prove this point, that a belief in Purgatory has always been a part of the Christian faith, nor yet to shew how fully this doctrine coincides both with all that we should naturally conceive of the justice and goodness of God, and all that we know from revelation about other portions of Catholic doctrine. No doubt this would be a very interesting and useful work; but at present we must *confine ourselves* to the plan we have followed in the other *tracts* of this series; and having first explained what the Catholic belief on this subject really is, we must now *proceed* to inquire how far Protestants are able to justify

their rejection of this belief by an appeal to their professed standard of truth, the written word of God. Observe, then, that we are not setting about to prove the Catholic doctrine by texts of Scripture, or even to insist that the passages of Scripture which we shall quote contain or imply that doctrine, but only to inquire whether there are not certain portions of the Bible which Protestants are obliged to do violence to, or to pass by altogether, in consequence of their disbelief of this doctrine.

1. First, then, we would ask, if there be only two places, or states of souls, in the invisible world, heaven and hell, what do Protestants understand by those words of St. Peter (i. 3, 19), wherein he tells us that our Lord, after His crucifixion, went in the spirit and "preached to those spirits that were in prison, which had been some time incredulous, when they waited for the patience of God in the days of Noe?" Where was this prison? It could not have been heaven that is called by this name; for the name necessarily implies a certain idea of punishment; neither could it have been the prison of hell; for wherefore should Christ preach to persons who were already condemned, and condemned for ever and ever without any hope or possibility of release? What, then, was this prison, in which souls were being then detained which had left this world of ours so many hundred years before, and yet were neither in heaven nor in hell? This is a question which no Catholic has any difficulty in answering, but which must needs be a cause of great perplexity to persons professing to receive "the whole Bible," and yet refusing to believe in the existence of any intermediate place between the abode of everlasting happiness on the one hand, and that of everlasting misery on the other.

2. But there is another text also which speaks of "a prison," and this too is not an everlasting prison, but one from which persons may be delivered on the fulfilment of certain conditions. We refer to those words of our Lord recorded in the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke (St. Matt. v. 25, 26; St. Luke xii. 58, 59): "*Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge*

and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou repay the last farthing." Now Protestant commentators agree with Catholics in applying these words to the necessity of effecting our reconciliation with God during this life. "Whilst we are in the way" they interpret of this mortal life, during which we are on our way to the judgment-seat of Christ; but the only "prison" whose existence they recognise in the next world is the prison-house of hell, and from this there is no rescue, no redemption; whereas the passage before us clearly sets a period to the imprisonment, and says, "Thou shalt not come out till thou hast paid the last farthing." It speaks, then, not of the prison of hell, but of some other prison from which persons are finally delivered, when they have suffered all the punishment due to their sins. To grievous sins unrepented of and unforgiven, eternal punishment is due; and for these, therefore, "the last farthing" can never be paid. Of what, then, does our Lord here speak, but either of lesser sins, to which a lesser punishment is due, or else of that lesser degree of punishment, that *temporary* punishment, which has been already mentioned as part of the penalty of sin which the sinner is made to pay even when the guilt of his sin and its eternal punishment has been remitted to him? In either of these cases, when the debt of punishment is paid in the prison of purgatory, the soul is released and goes to heaven; and with this interpretation, therefore, the whole passage becomes clear and forcible, and the last clause of it is as easy to be understood as every other; whereas Protestants, on the other hand, are obliged to pass over this last clause altogether, or to treat it as though it was equivalent to saying that the person spoken of would never come out of prison at all.

3. Nor are these the only words spoken by our Blessed Lord, to which, in consequence of their denial of the doctrine of Purgatory, they are driven to do violence, and to pretend that they mean something different from what they say. It is precisely thus that they treat those words addressed to the Pharisees, "Whosoever shall speak a word

against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, *neither in this world nor in the world to come*" (St. Matt. xii. 32). Protestants have not hesitated to say, that these last words are redundant, that they have no distinct meaning, but might very well have been omitted. Indeed, how was it possible for them to say any thing else, seeing that they do not believe that any sins at all, neither slight sins nor grievous sins, are ever forgiven in the world to come? Far different were the thoughts of St. Augustine, a great Christian saint and bishop, who lived more than 1400 years ago: "Surely," he says, "these words would never have been spoken, had there not been some sins which would be forgiven in the next world, even though they had not been forgiven in this." And this is just what Catholics believe; they believe that grievous and mortal sins can only be forgiven to the sinner whilst he is yet alive and heartily repentant of his sin; but that a Christian soul habitually serving God, yet falling also into some of those lesser faults of which St. James speaks when he says that "in many things we offend all," and then cut off from all opportunity of doing penance for them, by sudden death, for example, or in any other way, will nevertheless receive forgiveness of those sins after its separation from the body. Protestants deny this doctrine, for they only believe in the existence of two states of souls after death, either in heaven or in hell; in the first of these nothing can ever enter that stands in need of forgiveness; in the last, sins are only punished, not forgiven. It remains, then, that there is no forgiveness of sins in the next world, and therefore no meaning in those words which we have quoted, even though they are the words of Him who most emphatically declared that though "heaven and earth should pass away, His word should *not* pass away" (St. Mark xiii. 31).

4. There is yet another text also which must not be omitted whilst we are speaking of violence done to the written word of God by persons denying the existence of Purgatory. It is this: "Now if any man build upon this *foundation*, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be manifest, for the day

the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort. If any man's work abide, which he hath built there he shall receive a reward; if any man's work burn shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet by fire" (1 Cor. iii. 12-15). Now although it is not essential for our belief that this text should be shown to refer to the doctrine of Purgatory, and to nothing else, because, as has been already so often said, we do not profess to have extracted our creed from the Bible, nor that every article of our creed is clearly to be found there, yet it is essential for the Protestant that he should be able to supply some other interpretation of the passage without doing violence to the sacred text, shall yet exclude the idea of Purgatory, because he professes not to reject every Christian doctrine which is not in the Bible, but also to receive every doctrine that is there; and therefore he is not at liberty to pass this text by, and to take no account of it, just as though it had never been written. What must give it a place and a meaning in his system of belief? What doctrine then is there which is held by Protestants which really does give a sense and an explanation to the passage we have quoted? We know of none, and can find none in any of their commentators. "Gold; silver; precious stones" they may interpret, with Catholic doctrine of good works built on the one only abiding foundation, faith in Christ Jesus our Lord; but what do they understand by the "wood, hay, and stubble?" They may understand evil deeds and transgressions of God's commandments, because, though these, when "tried by fire in the day of the Lord," will "burn," yet, according to Protestant theology, the doers of them will suffer, not "loss," but eternal punishment, and they will therefore not be "*saved* as by fire," but rather will suffer in fire for ever and ever. Protestants do not recognise the distinction with which we are so familiar between mortal and venial sins, neither do they believe in the existence of a place of temporary probation where these smaller transgressions may be punished, yet the doers of them are eventually "*saved*;" and under these circumstances

language of St. Paul in this place becomes a real difficulty to them; it conveys no idea, imparts no instruction; it is not "profitable" either "to teach, to reprove, to correct, or to instruct in justice" (2 Tim. iii. 16); it is simply unintelligible: to a Catholic, on the other hand, it conveys precisely the same doctrine which he has been always taught from his infancy; it harmonises with all that he has ever heard and learnt and believed about a purgation by fire after death, whereby satisfaction is made to God for sins not sufficiently expiated during life.

Other passages might be quoted both from the Old and New Testaments, bearing upon this very interesting and important question; but what we have said must surely be enough to suggest to the mind of any thoughtful Protestant a very grave suspicion whether the system of doctrine which he has been taught really embraces, as it professes to do, the *whole* Bible; and if it does not do this, how can any man who values that sacred book, and believes it to contain the revelation of God, be contented to put up with a system so manifestly imperfect, and to trust to it his hopes of salvation? What God has revealed, man must believe, if he desires to be saved; the *whole* of God's revelation, neither more nor less. If, then, you are satisfied that the Bible contains the whole of that revelation, and that there is nothing which you ought to know or believe but what may be found there, you ought at least to be very careful in ascertaining what its contents really are, and that there is not a single portion of them which does not find its proper place somewhere in your creed. You are not at liberty to say or to think about any portion of it, "This is of no importance; it may be a part of God's revelation, or it may not, but in either case it is of no real consequence; even though God has revealed it, it is not necessary that we should believe it." To argue thus is to set yourself up above God, to submit His divine word to your own private conceits, and *not* to receive but to *mutilate* His revelation. Yet this is what Protestants are really guilty of, when they are contented to pass by and utterly neglect passages of *Holy Scripture* like those which have been quoted in the *present tract*. It is nothing to the purpose to say that th

name of purgatory is never so much as once mentioned in these passages, and that the idea of it, as it has been here explained, is nowhere clearly expounded, or even necessarily implied in them. We have not pretended that it is. We stated and explained to you the doctrine of Purgatory, only that you might have an opportunity of seeing whether that doctrine does not supply a key to the right interpretation of the passages in question; but our main object has been to urge upon you this very important consideration, that *Protestantism has no doctrine which gives any interpretation of them at all*. To Protestants, these passages are mere words, and nothing else; and as long as this is the case, they cannot truly be said to receive the *whole* Bible; there are certain portions of it which, if they do not positively reject and expunge from the sacred text, yet they certainly set aside and practically disregard.

And this is the truth which we have been endeavouring to establish throughout the whole series of tracts of which this is the conclusion. As we said at the beginning, the Protestants' rule of faith is negative rather than positive; it insists upon *the Bible only*, to the exclusion of every thing else, but it is not equally jealous about receiving *the whole Bible*, every part of it. And the consequence is, that they really treat the Bible with extreme irreverence; they pick out a certain number of books, or chapters of books, or even single verses, and practically treat these fragments as though they were the whole. They first arbitrarily decide for themselves that these particular portions are the most important in the book; and then draw the further conclusion that the other portions are of no real importance at all. In their extreme anxiety to escape from certain portions of this book which seem to be opposed to particular articles of their own creed, they so handle them as in fact flatly to contradict them; whilst of others they are contented to make no use whatever, but to leave them, like words in an unknown tongue, without any meaning at all. Instances of the former kind we have seen in their mode of handling the words of our Lord and His Apostles, whenever they speak of men being sent with authority to teach the Gospel even as Christ had been sent by His Father, and of there

being a succession of these "faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also," even to the end of the world; of the duty of hearing the Church, and of holding traditions whether written or unwritten, and of the Church being "the pillar and ground of the truth." We have seen, I say, in the first and second tracts of this series, how the Protestant attempts to explain away such passages as these are in fact nothing more nor less than a *denial* of them all. In the later tracts we have seen how the same may be said also of the Protestant interpretation of the language, both of Christ and of His Apostles, concerning the Sacraments of Baptism and of the holy Eucharist; how they do not believe that we are born again of water and of the Holy Spirit, but of the Holy Spirit only; nor that sins are washed away by baptism, and that it is necessary that we should be baptised for the remission of our sins, as St. Peter assured the assembled multitudes on the day of Pentecost, and as Ananias, a messenger sent by God, told St. Paul. Neither do they believe that when our Lord said "This is My body—this is My blood," that it really *was* His body and His blood; nor yet that the bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ, though St. Paul says that it is. All this they emphatically deny. We have seen, too, how utterly they disregard the distinct declaration of St. James concerning the sacrament of extreme unction; and how they refuse to believe that any "gift of God" is imparted by "the laying on of hands" in the sacrament of holy orders, though St. Paul told St. Timothy that there was; or that Christ's promise, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them," has any use or meaning at the present day. They pay no attention at all to what is revealed in the Bible concerning holy men, God's chosen servants, interceding with Him in behalf of others against whom His wrath had been justly kindled, and their intercession being mercifully accepted; nor yet to the very clear indications which are given us in the same book about the saints and angels having knowledge of the affairs of this world, taking a lively interest in them, and being filled with indignation or with joy according to the character of the several events which they witness. They see nothing remarkable in wh

the Gospel has recorded concerning the history of St. Peter; no meaning in his change of name from Simon to that of a "rock," and in the promise by which that change was accompanied, that upon *this* rock Christ's Church should be built; no special privilege in his being entrusted with the keys of the kingdom of heaven; no hidden mystery in the commission given to him by our Lord, that when he was converted, he was to "strengthen" his brethren: all these things they believe as historical facts, but they give them no place or meaning in their system of religious doctrines. And now, lastly, we have seen with what indifference they can listen to our Lord denouncing a particular sin, as one that will not be forgiven even in the next world, believing all the while that in this respect the sin specified differs not at all from any other, for that the same thing might be said of all sins alike; and how carelessly they read the words of St. Paul, describing the trial which our works shall one day undergo, and mentioning of some men that their works shall burn yet themselves be saved, without caring to inquire how this shall be, or of whom such things can be spoken. And yet these are the men who pretend that they alone treat the Bible with due reverence, and make a boast of their exclusive regard for it, professing to acknowledge no other authority. They may not, indeed, be conscious of what they do; but the rule of faith which they actually follow, so far from being the Bible and the Bible only, is simply their own private imaginations, or those of their parents or instructors; and though it may not be difficult to find here and there in the Bible a few individual texts, which, when taken alone, and wrested from their true meaning by the violence of traditional prejudice or private interpretation, may seem to give countenance to their errors, yet it is certain, on the other hand, as in the numerous instances which have now been given, that there are other parts of the same book which their system of doctrine either denies or ignores; and there is nothing but the *authoritative* teaching of the Church to which the *whole Bible in all its integrity* perfectly corresponds.

Historical Library.

EEN ELIZABETH AND HER PEOPLE.

III.

THE GOLDEN DAYS OF GOOD QUEEN BESS.



By Permission.

LONDON:

JURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STRFET,

PORTMAN SQUARE.

READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

1853.

[Price 8d

The Golden Days of Good Queen Bess.

GOLD is red, and so is blood. If Elizabeth's days are "golden" in the sight of Protestants, because they were sunny and bright with this world's glory, to the eyes of Catholics they are stained with a crimson flood of gore, because of the fierce and deadly persecution which their fathers had to endure at her hands for the sake of their holy faith.

That blood was shed, and shed in torrents, our enemies cannot deny; but nevertheless they will have it that the persecution was not a religious persecution. They wish to rob our Catholic fathers of the glory of martyrdom; and so they say that it was because they were bad subjects, traitors, and rebels, in short, that they were so rigorously treated by their Protestant queen.

Well, *when* did this ill-behaviour of theirs begin? Not at her accession, for they readily owned her title to the throne. Not when it was made death to deny the queen to be head of the Church, and imprisonment for life to use any but the State Prayer-book, and a weekly fine of a shilling was imposed for attending any but the State worship; not even when it was made death for any man, whether priest or layman, to refuse the oath of supremacy; for (as has been shewn on the confession of Protestant historians themselves) the Catholics had done nothing to deserve such treatment. Not in the northern rebellion; for large bodies of Catholics joined the royal forces; and Cecil himself, in one of his foreign dispatches, declared that "the queen's majesty hath had a notable trial of her whole realm and subjects in this time, wherein she hath had service readily of all sorts, without respect of religion." Not when the Pope issued his bull of excommunication and deposition against Elizabeth; for the Catholics did not act upon it, and

heretofore could not justly be regarded as parties to it. 'Still,' insist our Protestant assailants, "if it was not then, it was afterwards."

But *when*? I am prepared to shew you that at no time were Catholics rebels or traitors, even in the Protestant sense of the terms. That they had every right to rebel, I have all along maintained, for the persecution raised against their religion, to say nothing of the sanction of the Pope, fully justified recourse to arms; so that, had they rebelled and suffered in consequence, I might still contend that, in that sense, they suffered for their religion, because it was the persecution of their religion which had driven them to rebel. However, the question is one of facts; and these facts I shall now proceed to put before you as concisely as I can.

The Pope's bull of deposition against Elizabeth was issued, as we have seen, at the beginning of the year 1570; and in the spring of the year following, parliament met for the third time. That strong measures should be taken to prevent the execution of the bull; or that any attempt to publish it, or other like instrument, or to procure its formal recognition by the Catholics, should be declared a capital offence, would have been matter neither of surprise nor of complaint, considered simply as a political precaution on the part of an heretical government. Instead of which, however, it was made high treason "to sue for, obtain, or put in use *any* bull, writing, or instrument from the Bishop of Rome, *containing any matter or thing whatsoever*." That is to say, the Catholics of England were to be cut off from all communication, however purely spiritual in its nature, with the head of their Church. Their faith taught them that it was necessary to be in communion with the successor of St. Peter; that their Bishops and clergy possessed no spiritual powers, and could exercise no spiritual jurisdiction, except as dependent on his supreme authority; nay (as Mackintosh observes), "many of the moral relations of life were, in their opinion, legitimatised solely by his intervention;" yet the only choice left for them was to forego *all these inestimable benefits*, or to enjoy them at the per

of their lives. Death of the soul, or of the body, was the alternative proposed.

The same law forbade, under the same penalty, the absolving and reconciling any one to the Catholic Church, or the being so reconciled, by virtue of such bulls or writings; which was, in fact, an interdiction of the sacrament of penance; making it high treason for a sinner to confess his sins to a priest and receive absolution, as well as for the priest to exercise this essential part of his sacred office. It was principally intended, however, to prevent such as had conformed to the Protestant religion from returning to the Catholic faith; and now mark the iniquitous tyranny of this statute. If a Catholic once conformed, however unwillingly,—if but once, to save himself from being fined or otherwise punished, he attended the State service,—from that moment the law regarded him as a Protestant; and if he repented of his sin and wished to return, in other words, to remain what in his conscience he had never ceased to be, the fate that awaited him was death by the hands of the common hangman, with all its attendant and unspeakable atrocities. Yes, my friends, to “turn Catholic,” as it is called, was, in the days of “good Queen Bess,” to die the horrible death of a traitor! But the chief offenders were not the only persons to whom the law extended its merciless provisions: all aiders and abettors, all, that is, who were in any way instrumental in bringing another back to the Catholic Church, were to suffer the penalties of *præmunire*, in other words, to forfeit all their goods and be imprisoned for life. Can you wonder, then, that conversions were so rare from that time forward, or that England soon became a Protestant country?

It would be very difficult, I ween, to make out that the actions thus made criminal by law had any thing in them of a treasonable nature, or that to punish them was aught else than religious persecution; but the act of parliament went further still. It inflicted the penalties of *præmunire* on all who should introduce into the country—now, what do you think? perhaps the racks and tortures of the terrible *Inquisition* you have heard so much about; or some “infernal machine” for the sudden destruction of the queen

and all her newly-created "bishops;" or a cardinal in disguise. Then at least his robes and scarlet stockings, and the other paraphernalia of his dignity and office; or one of the Pope's slippers, as a symbol of his territorial power. No, it doomed to the total loss of liberty and property all such as should either bring, or receive, a certain little devotional object in wax called an "Agnus Dei," from its having the image of the *Lamb of God* stamped upon it, or crosses, or pictures, or beads blessed by the Pope, or by others deriving authority from him. Such also as concealed or connived at this offence were to be held guilty of misprision of treason! So it was: one of the most heinous crimes which a British subject could commit, in the estimation of these wise Protestant ancestors of ours, was to be a party in conveying or receiving the Pope's blessing in any material form. It may be supposed they thought that the only persons who had a right to bless a native of these islands were their majesties the kings and queens of England, and that to shew the Pope a preference in such a matter was an insult to the nation and an aggression on the royal prerogative.

However, Protestantism was not even yet considered to be secure; Popery must be kept out of England, cost what it might: why, if precautions were not taken, people might go abroad, fall in love with what they saw and heard in Popish lands, and carry it back with them into their own country; in some way or other they might lend the hated religion a helping hand, and pave the way for its restoration. So a third bill was passed, ordering every body who had left, or should hereafter leave, the realm, even though it were with express license from the crown, to return in six months' time, under penalty of forfeiting his goods and chattels, and the profits of his lands during life, to the use of the queen. An enviable sort of liberty this! If Catholics stayed quietly at home, they must violate their consciences by professing Protestantism; and if they went abroad, they must sacrifice their fortunes to the queen's use.

Having made the Catholic religion high treason by act of parliament, of course it would be no difficult matter for the government to prove its professors to be disaffected.

persons. In fact, every Catholic, as such, became a traitor. This being so, the sentence of death thus hanging over them as certainly as if they had been captured with arms in their hands, could it have been any matter of surprise had the Catholics of this country preferred being robbed of their property, thrown into gaol, or even hanged, drawn, and quartered, for something a little more adventurous than the peaceful exercise of their religion? Why in the world should they not be "traitors and rebels" in good earnest? There was a chance at least of bettering their condition, and getting toleration for themselves, if nothing more. Many naturally reasoned thus; and the consequence was a conspiracy, in which a considerable number of Catholics were concerned, to procure, not the death of Elizabeth, nor (avowedly at least) her dethronement, but the repeal of the sanguinary penal laws, the liberation of Mary Queen of Scots, who, as you know, had been detained many years in an English prison, her recognition as next heir to the crown (which any way she was), and her marriage with the Duke of Norfolk, who, though a Protestant, was believed to be well disposed towards Catholics. I told you in my last of a previous attempt of this kind, in which Norfolk was supposed to be implicated, and was accordingly sent to the Tower, October 9th, 1569. The design was now renewed, and assistance sought from foreign powers, especially from Spain. Ere it was ripe for execution, the plot was discovered, and Norfolk suffered death, June 8th, 1572. In this conspiracy many Catholics, as I have said, were engaged, though it was far from being the act of the whole body; but even had it been so, this was no reason for the proscription of the entire Catholic population, or the extirpation of their religion. No doubt the Pope also was privy to the enterprise, and gave it his encouragement and support, in conjunction with other Catholic powers; but this, again, was no excuse for pursuing to the death such as were not proved to have taken part therein. That there *was much* in the aspect of affairs, both at home and abroad, *to fill Elizabeth with alarm* cannot be denied; but she had *brought it on herself* by her unjust imprisonment of the *Scottish queen* and her violent conduct towards her Ca-

tholic subjects. First she perpetrated most flagrant acts of cruelty and injustice against them, and then getting afraid of the consequences of her own evil deeds, she was driven to perpetrate still worse enormities, in order to avert the danger with which she found herself threatened; she could not stop even if she would; the more extreme Protestants, or Puritans, as they were called, who were now the dominant party in the House of Commons, would not allow her to pause in the course on which she had entered. They thirsted for blood, and began to call loudly for the death of Mary, whose only crime was that of being a Catholic and presumptive heir to the throne; if not, in the estimation of many, the present rightful sovereign. They had failed in an attempt to implicate her in an impeachment by a retrospective act of parliament, and now they sent up an address to the queen, in which they did not scruple to affirm, on the authority of Scripture and the civil law, that "it stood not only with justice, but with the queen's majesty's honour and safety" to send her royal prisoner to the scaffold. Nor were the Puritans the only persons who sought her life: Archbishop Parker, in a letter to Cecil, urged the "taking of her away," on the plea that by such means all good Protestants "would be in better hope," and "the Papists" be disappointed of their "expectation."

While such were the designs entertained by the Protestant party against the unhappy lady, whose wrongs naturally filled the hearts of Catholics with sorrow and indignation, the latter were themselves the objects of an implacable hatred, which all they had suffered, and all the government had done against them, failed to satisfy. The words of Hallam, whom nobody can suspect of unduly favouring Catholics, are so express on this point, that I cannot do better than quote them. "Such of the queen's advisers," he says, "as leaned towards the Puritan faction, and too many of the Anglican clergy, whether Puritan or not, thought no measure of charity or compassion should be extended to them. With the divines they were idolaters; with the *council* they were a dangerous and disaffected party; with the *judges* they were refractory transgressors of statutes

on every side they were obnoxious and oppressed. A few aged men having been set at liberty, Sampson, the famous Puritan, himself a sufferer for conscience sake"—for Elizabeth persecuted all who differed from the established Church or disputed her supremacy, though, as Mackintosh observes, "the Puritans were too highly patronised, powerful, and independent, they had too many favourers in the House of Commons, and even at court, to be proscribed, tortured, and hanged, like the Roman Catholics,"—Sampson, I say, "wrote a letter of remonstrance to Lord Burleigh, in which he urged that they should be *compelled to hear sermons*, though he would not *at first* oblige them to communicate. A bill having been introduced in the session of 1571, imposing a penalty for not receiving the communion [after Protestant fashion], it was objected that consciences ought not to be forced. But Mr. Strickland (one of the most liberal of the Puritan party), entirely denied this principle, and quoted authorities against it. Even Parker, by no means tainted with Puritan bigotry, and who had been reckoned moderate in his proceedings towards Catholics, complained of the queen's lenity in not *rooting them out*. The indulgence shewn by Elizabeth, the topic of reproach in those times, and sometimes of boast in our own, never extended to any positive toleration, nor even to any general connivance at the Romish worship in its most private exercise." Then, after alluding to the declaration of 1570, already mentioned, in which she said that she "did not intend to sift men's consciences, provided they observed her laws by coming to church;" which she well knew no real Catholic could do, he goes on to state that, in spite of this royal promise, "the government did not always abstain from an inquisition into men's private thoughts. The inns of court were more than once purified from popery, by examining their members on articles of faith. Gentlemen of good families in the country were harassed in the same manner. One Sir Richard Shelley, who had long acted as a sort of spy for Cecil on the continent, and given much useful information, requested only leave to enjoy his religion without hindrance [in fact, to go to Mass while at Paris]; but the Queen did not accede to this

without much reluctance and delay. She had indeed assigned no other ostensible pretext for breaking off her own marriage with the Archduke Charles (and subsequently with the Dukes of Anjou and Alençon), than her determination not to suffer the Mass to be celebrated even in her husband's private chapel. It is worthy to be repeatedly inculcated on the reader, since so false a colour has been often employed to disguise the ecclesiastical tyranny of this reign, that *the most clandestine exercise of the Romish religion was severely punished*. Thus we read in the life of Whitgift, 1578, that, on information given that some ladies and others heard Mass in the house of one Edwards by night, in the county of Denbigh, he, being then Bishop of Worcester and vice-president of Wales, was directed to make inquiry into the facts, and finally was instructed to commit Edwards to close prison; and as for another person implicated, named Morice, 'if he remained obstinate, he might cause *some kind of torture to be used upon him*; and the like order they prayed him to use with the others.' But this is one of many instances, the events of every day, forgotten on the morrow, and of which no general historian takes account" (*Constitutional History*, chap. iii. pp. 140-142, edition of 1850).

Dr. Lingard also thus describes the condition of the Catholics at this time: "Many of the more zealous or more timid among them sought, with their families, an asylum beyond the sea. Their lands and property were immediately seized by the crown, and given, or sold at low prices, to the followers of the court (Strype gives a list of sixty-eight persons whose property was thus confiscated). Those who remained, and who could not in conscience comply with the command to attend the established service, were compelled to pass their lives in alarm and solicitude. They lay at the mercy of their neighbours and enemies; they were daily watched by the pursuivants; they were liable at any hour to be hurried before the courts of high commission, to be interrogated upon oath, how often they had been at church, and when or where they had received the sacrament; to be condemned, as recusants, to fines and imprisonment, or, as persons reconciled, to forfeitur

and confinement for life. Their terrors were renewed every year by proclamations, or secret messages, calling upon magistrates, the bishops, and the ecclesiastical commissioners, to redouble their vigilance, and enforce the law respecting religion. Private houses were searched to discover priests or persons assisting at Mass. The foreign ambassadors complained of the violation of their privilege by the intrusion of the pursuivants into their chapels" to see if any British subjects were present at the forbidden worship); "and even Elizabeth herself, to give the example, occasionally condescended to commit to prison the recusants who were denounced to her in the course of her progresses. One instance of this is so extraordinary, presenting a specimen (to use Mr. Hallam's words) "an almost incredible specimen of ungracious behaviour" towards a Catholic gentleman, that it deserves a special notice.

In her "progresses," or journeys through the country Elizabeth was in the habit of taking up her lodgings at mansions of the nobility and gentry, with their will or without their will. While thus quartering herself upon them she treated their houses and grounds, and indeed everything they had, as if they were her own; "havocking" the lands, and slaughtering their deer, and otherwise disposing herself at pleasure, so that a royal visit was a somewhat expensive compliment. In the month of August 1561 "her majesty," says Miss Strickland, "was pleased to make one of her self-invited visits to Euston Hall, in Suffolk, belonging to a young gentleman of the ancient house of Rookwood, who had just come of age. Here she abode with suite a whole fortnight; and though much abuse is levelled at the youthful owner, it seems his religion was his crime. 'By some device,' said Topcliffe—a red-hot Protestant, in a letter which he indited on the occasion—"Papist, newly crept out of his wardship, was brought before her majesty's presence, and her excellent majesty gave him ordinary (usual) thanks for his bad house, and her fair hand to kiss. But my lord chamberlain (Lord Sussex), not so and gravely understanding that Rookwood was excommunicated for Papistry, called him before him, demanded of him how he durst presume to attempt her royal pres-

he unfit to accompany any Christian person; forthwith said he was fitter for a pair of stocks, commanded him out of the court, and yet to attend her council's pleasure.' This was a strange return for a fortnight's hospitality" (continues Miss S.), "for if the queen and her courtiers had not liked their entertainment, why did they stay so long? But alas for poor Rookwood! his guests were not contented with this curious specimen of their courtly manners. Their next proceeding was to raise an outcry that some of their property had been stolen, as a pretence for ransacking his house and premises." Among other things, the letter gives an account how, by the queen's command, they burned an image of our Lady, after performing "a sort of country dances" round it "in her majesty's sight." But the guests of Euston Hall had not yet done with their young host; for the writer relates with great glee, what he calls a piece of "good news" and "in account the highest," how "her majesty hath *served God with great zeal and comfortable examples*; for by her council two notorious Papists, young Rookwood and one Downes, a gentleman, were both committed, the one to the town prison at Norwich, the other to the county prison there, for obstinate Papistry; and seven more gentlemen of worship (whose names he gives) were committed to several houses in Norwich for badness of belief." "Such," adds Miss Strickland, "were our [Protestant] forefathers' ideas of serving God, 'with great zeal and comfortable examples;' the strangest part of the letter is, that a man could write down a narrative of such conduct, without perceiving the hideousness of the polemic spirit that inspired his exultation at the incarceration of an unoffending young gentleman among felons in a common gaol, for no greater crime than quiet adherence to the faith in which he had been educated." And what dens of filth were gaols at this time! It was only the preceding year that, when sentence was being passed on one Jenks, a Catholic bookseller in Oxford, the noxious vapours which clave to the prisoners, suddenly struck the two judges, the sheriff and under sheriff, four magistrates, most of the jury, and many of the spectators, with a pestilence which left them dead men in the course of thirty hours. This

Jenks, I may mention by the way, had been apprehended for speaking against the new religion; his goods were seized, and himself kept in irons two months, at the end of which time he was condemned to have his ears nailed to the pillory, and *to deliver himself by cutting them off with his own hand*. On another occasion not fewer than twenty Catholics of family and fortune, imprisoned for their religion, perished of an infectious disease in the castle of York; and a similar fate befel the Catholics confined in Newgate three years later. "This Topcliffe," observes Hallam, "was the most implacable persecutor of his age, a man whose daily occupation it was to hunt out and molest men for Popery. In a letter to Lord Burleigh (Cecil) he urges him to imprison all the principal recusants, and especially women, 'the further off from their own family and friends the better.' Instances of the ill-treatment experienced by respectable families, and *even aged ladies*, without any other provocation than their recusancy, may be found. Those furthest removed from Puritanism partook sometimes of the same tyrannous spirit. Aylmer, bishop of London, renowned for his persecution of nonconformists, is said to have sent a *young Catholic lady* to be whipped in Bridewell for refusing to conform." Such are among the records of the "golden days" of this famous queen.

Up to the year 1573, though it would not be true to say that Catholics had not *died* for their religion in this reign (for many lost their lives through the rigorous confinement and other hardships which they had to endure), yet no one had been actually *put to death*. In the June of that year, however, Thomas Woodhouse, a priest, was executed at Tyburn for daring to exercise his sacred ministry in defiance of the law. He was followed in 1577 by Cuthbert Mayne, a priest of Cornwall, and one of those heroic missionaries who, with the spirit which animated the first preachers of the Gospel, had devoted themselves to the propagation, or at least the preservation, of the faith in this hostile land.

I alluded in my last to certain seminaries which had been established abroad for the education of English priests. The Universities (founded, remember, by Catholics,) were

nger open to Catholic students; the clergy of the old on were fast dying off, and it had been made illegal dain others to succeed them; besides which, none but stant schools were allowed by law. Elizabeth and government flattered themselves that, with the effectual as they had taken, Popery must even die a natural : the Catholic priesthood, and with it, of course, the olic religion, would become extinct in the island. Little hey know the indomitable spirit of the men with whom had to do, nor the marvellous power of divine grace. e sight of men all was indeed lost; but the provi e of God did not fail His faithful people; He put it the heart of William Allen, formerly principal of St. 's Hall, Oxford, and afterwards a cardinal of the Ro- Church, to found a college at Douay, in Flanders, e English youths might study theology, receive holy s, and return to their native land to minister at the

This was in 1568; and in the course of five years any as a hundred missionaries were sent to England. oly courage of these men, no less than their successes g the people, embarrassed and incensed the Protestant nment; and like Herod of old, who thought to strike r into the hearts of the first Christians, by slaying one eir chief Apostles (Acts xx. 1, 2), these persecutors e faith "stretched forth their hands to afflict some of hurch;" and Cuthbert Mayne was the first to fall a 1 to their fury. He was accused of obtaining a bull Rome, of denying the queen's supremacy, and saying at the house of one Mr. Tregian, a gentleman of for- whose chaplain he was. The bull he was charged introducing was, in reality, nothing but a printed of the *Jubilee*, published the preceding year, which he purchased at a shop, a paper, anyhow, of a purely ous character; but even of this, as of the other pred crimes for which he was tried, no legal or satisfac- evidence could be adduced. The court, however, ned the jury—mark this, ye who boast of Protestant e—that "when plain proofs were wanting, strong mptions were sufficient;" and he was condemned ac- gly. He was hanged at Launceston "without any

charge against him," says Hallam, "except his religion:" "his offence," observes also Sir James Macintosh, or his continuator, "was religious, not political." With this good priest were condemned in the penalties of *præmunire* fifteen persons, neighbours and servants of Mr. Tregian, as aiders and abettors of what was called high treason!

Mr. Tregian himself received the same judgment, by which he was doomed to perpetual imprisonment, and his estates confiscated to the crown. For eight and twenty years he remained a prisoner in the common gaol at Launceston, or in the Fleet in London; no solicitation could move the queen to mercy, though he had enjoyed her favour in time past; but after her death, he obtained his liberty from James I., at the request of the King of Spain, though only on the condition that the old man should quit the country for ever. His children made several attempts to recover their father's property from Charles I., but without success. A full account of the martyrdom of Cuthbert Mayne, and of the affecting sufferings of Mr. Tregian, is given in Challoner's *Missionary Priests*;* a work which I earnestly recommend to your attention, and that of all good Protestants.

English Protestantism had now tasted blood; and, as is the case with all beasts of prey, the taste made it thirst for more. By the injunctions published at the beginning of the reign, two informers had been appointed in every parish, to note and denounce all who absented themselves from the State service; their names were now regularly entered in a list of recusants; the magistrates were ordered to bestir themselves, and warned that a watchful eye was kept on their proceedings. Private houses were searched for recusants, with every circumstance of violence and insult; the gaols were crowded with Catholic prisoners. In 1578, Nelson, another seminary priest, and Sherwood, a youth but fourteen years of age, were driven by torture and cunning questions put to them by their judges, to assert that the queen was not head of the Church, but a

* A cheap edition is published by Richardson. A few selected *lives*, or rather deaths, of these holy men will be given in this series.

schismatic and a heretic. The latter was cruelly racked to make him discover where he had heard Mass, and then thrust into a dark, filthy hole, with the hope that the horrors of the place would break his youthful constancy. Both were executed in the most barbarous manner which the law directed, being hanged, cut down alive, ripped up, and dismembered, or, as it is generally called, "hanged, drawn, and quartered." All the sickening details of this horrible process (which were observed in every particular instance), will be found in the work to which I have referred, and which every one who has read Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, nay, I will say every Englishman who wishes honestly to know what Catholics have had to suffer for their religion in this country, is bound, at least once in his life, diligently to peruse. Thousands of educated men, I am convinced, are not even aware that such enormities were committed.

No fear of death or of the torments that awaited them could daunt these valiant soldiers of the cross. The same fire of divine love which urged the Apostles to the spiritual conquest of the world, and brought the first preachers of the Gospel to these islands, still burned in the breast of Peter's successor, and animated the priests of the Church with a holy emulation for the recovery of England to the faith. In the year 1579, Pope Gregory XIII. opened a seminary at Rome for the English exiles; and at the earnest entreaty of Allen, the noble order of the Jesuits, always foremost where death was to be confronted, contributed a gallant band of missionaries, to share with their secular brethren the dangers and the glory of the enterprise. The first to land upon these shores (June 1580) were Robert Persons and Edward Campian, two Englishmen of distinguished ability and merit, the latter of whom, a convert to Catholicism, had made himself remarkable for his learning and talents while a student at Oxford, where he had received Protestant orders. Their arrival did not escape the watchful eye of the government; and, under the pretence that they were political emissaries employed by the Pope and foreign powers to excite the Catholics to revolt, peremptory orders were given to the officers of justice to hunt out and apprehend them. At the same time, a royal proclamation wa

issued, commanding every one whose children, relations or wards had been sent abroad for education, to give their names forthwith, and to recall them within six months; warning also all persons whatsoever, that if they knew or heard of *any* Jesuit or seminary priest in the kingdom, and either presumed to harbour him or did not reveal the place of his concealment, they should be prosecuted and punished as abettors of treason. Thus, not only parties in question, but every Jesuit and seminary priest who had come into England, was, without one tittle of evidence, declared as such to be a traitor in disguise. An occasion was thus found for increased severities against the Catholics. Parliament met again January 26th, 1554, and the ministers of the Crown called upon the two Houses to enact without delay another set of penal laws. The call was readily obeyed; a law was passed, which, repeating the provisions of the former act, making it high treason to reconcile any of her majesty's subjects or to be reconciled to the Church of Rome, extended the same penalties (instead of those of *præmunire*, as heretofore) to those who should procure or abet such reconciliation. At the same time, the punishment for saying Mass was increased to payment of 200 marks,* and one year's imprisonment; for hearing Mass, 100 marks, and the same term of imprisonment. The fine for absence from the Protestant service was fixed at 20*l.* a month; and if that absence continued for a year, the "recusant," as he was called, was to give two securities for his future good conduct in 200*l.* each. Such as could not pay the fine within three months, on judgment, were to be imprisoned until they conformed; that is, turned Protestant; but by a subsequent act (1555) the queen had the power of seizing two-thirds of the offender's lands, and all his personal property, in default of payment every six months. It is well to repeat all the details of these odious laws, that you may really see that the persecution was thoroughly in earnest, and one not easily evaded. But further, to prevent priests being concealed in private families as tutors or schoolmasters, every pe-

* A mark was 13*s.* 4*d.*, or two-thirds of a pound.

acting in such capacity without license from the Protestant "bishop," was liable to be fined 10*l.* a month, disabled from teaching school, and imprisoned for a year, while his employer was to pay a similar fine of 10*l.* a month.

The falsehood of the accusation brought against the Catholic missionaries of being preachers of sedition, I partly exposed in my last. These brave men, of whom the world was not worthy, came simply to seek and to save the souls for which Christ died. That they regarded Elizabeth as their rightful sovereign, or that they would not have rejoiced to see her government overturned for religion's sake, it would be absurd to pretend; but the cause for which they gladly risked their liberty and their lives was the same for which the Apostles rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to suffer, and for which in the end they severally shed their blood. On their arrival, and before separating on their respective missions, the two Jesuit priests, Campian and Persons, had drawn up a paper in answer to the queen's proclamation, in which they stated the reasons which had led them to return to England. Each entrusted his own statement to the care of a friend, with an injunction not to make it public, unless the writer were apprehended and thrown into prison.* One of these friends betrayed his trust, and published the paper of Campian, under the title of a "Letter to the Lords of the Council." In it the missionary asserted that he was come solely to exercise the spiritual functions of the priesthood, and had been strictly forbidden by his superiors to meddle with worldly concerns or affairs of state; requested permission to dispute on religion before the queen, the council, and the two universities; and declared that all the Jesuits in the world had made a holy league to brave every danger, suffer every kind of torment, and shed their blood, if it were necessary, for the restoration and propagation of the Catholic faith.

For nearly a year Campian eluded his pursuers; but during that time the Catholics had been exposed to severities of which they had previously no conception. No man

* The account given above is taken almost verbatim from Dr. Lingard's *History*, to which the writer is also indebted for much that follows.

could enjoy security even in the privacy of his own house, where he was liable at all hours, but generally in the night, to be visited by a magistrate at the head of an armed mob. At a signal given, the doors were burst open; and these Protestant inquisitors rushed into the different apartments, examined the beds, tore the tapestry and wainscoting from the walls, forced open the closets, drawers, coffers, in short ransacked the house, and did whatever mischief they pleased, with the hope of discovering, or under the pretence of searching for, a priest, or books, chalices, and vestments, used in Catholic worship. "Sometimes also" (says a manuscript of the time) "they placed watchmen in the chambers of the house, both to take care that no Catholic should stir to relieve the priest—though commonly they made them sure for that, by locking them all up together in one part of the house—and besides that they might hearken if any little stirring be behind a wall, yea to the breathing or coughing of a priest." To resist or to remonstrate was only to provoke worse usage. All the inmates were interrogated, and their persons searched, under the pretext that superstitious articles might be concealed among their clothes; and there are instances on record of females of rank whose reason and lives were endangered from the brutality of the officers. By such means Lady Neville was frightened to death in Holborn, and Mrs. Vavaseur lost her reason at York. At length Campian was taken at Lyfford in Berkshire, and conveyed with his arms bound and his legs tied under the horse on which he was mounted, in triumphal procession to the Tower. His companion Persons continued for some months to brave the danger which menaced him; but at length, at the urgent request of his friends, both for their security and for his own, he retired beyond the sea.

Let us follow Campian to the end. The use of the torture was common to most of the European nations: in England, during the reign of Elizabeth, it was employed with the most wanton barbarity. A Catholic prisoner was hardly lodged in the Tower before he was placed on the rack; and *if he were supposed to be a priest, was interrogated why he had come to England, where he had resided, whom he had reconciled, what he had learned from the confession of*

others, and in what places his colleagues were concealed. The following were the instruments of torture chiefly employed in the Tower :

1. The *rack*, a large open frame of oak, raised three feet from the ground. The prisoner was laid under it, on his back, on the floor ; his wrists and ankles were attached by cords to two rollers at the ends of the frame ; these were moved by levers in opposite directions till the body rose to a level with the frame. Questions were then put ; and if the answers did not prove satisfactory, the sufferer was stretched more and more, till the bones started from their sockets.

2. The *scavenger's daughter*, a broad hoop of iron so called, consisting of two parts fastened to each other by a hinge. The prisoner was made to kneel on the pavement, and to contract himself into as small a compass as he could. Then the executioner, kneeling on his shoulders, and having introduced the hoop under his legs, compressed the victim close together till he was able to fasten the extremities over the small of the back. The time allotted to this kind of torture was an hour and a half, during which time it commonly happened that from excess of compression the blood started from the nostrils ; sometimes, it was believed, from the extremities of the hands and feet.

3. *Iron gauntlets*, which could be contracted by the aid of a screw. They served to compress the wrists, and to suspend the prisoner in the air from two distant points of a beam. He was placed on three pieces of wood, piled one on the other, which, when his hands had been made fast, were successively withdrawn from under his feet. "I felt," says F. Gerard, one of the sufferers, "the chief pain in my breast, belly, arms, and hands. I thought that all the blood in my body had run into my arms, and begun to burst out at my fingers' ends. This was a mistake ; but the arms swelled till the gauntlets were buried within the flesh. After being suspended an hour I fainted ; and when I came to myself, I found the executioners supporting me in their arms ; they replaced the pieces of wood under my feet ; but as soon as I was recovered, removed them again. Thus I continued hanging for the space of five hours, during which

I fainted eight or nine times." (Merry times—golden days these for Catholics!)

4. The *little-ease*, a cell of so small dimensions, and so constructed, that the prisoner could neither stand, sit, nor lie in it at full length. He was compelled to draw himself up in a squatting posture, and so remain several days.

5. The *needles*, which were thrust under the nails of the accused.

6. The *dungeon of rats*, a cell below high-water mark and totally dark. As the tide flowed, innumerable rats, infesting the muddy banks of the Thames, were driven through the orifices of the walls into the dungeon, and in their ferocious hunger tore the flesh from the arms and legs of the prisoner.

7. The *tying of the thumbs* together, and suspending the accused by them to a beam.

These instruments were in constant use: "The rack," says Hallam, "seldom stood idle in the Tower for all the latter part of Elizabeth's reign;" and Jardine, in his work on *The Use of Torture* (from which the preceding account is taken), observes, that "in the long catalogue of cases which occurred in the reign of a sovereign whom Protestants delight to honour, the most prominent for refinement of cruelty arose from Protestant persecution." A few lines from a Diary of the time will bring the matter home to you. Dec. 10th, 1580: Thomas Cottam and Luke Kirby, priests, suffered compression in the scavenger's daughter for more than an hour; Coltam bled profusely from the nose. Dec. 15th, Ralph Sherwine and Robert Johnson, priests, were severely tortured on the rack. Dec. 16th, The former was tortured a second time on the rack. Dec. 31st, John Hart, after being chained five days to the floor, was led to the rack; also Henry Orton, a lay gentleman. 1581, Jan. 3d, Christopher Thomson, an aged priest, was brought to the Tower, and racked the same day. Jan. 14th, Nicholas Roscaroe, a lay gentleman, was racked, and remained in prison till June 21, 1585, when he was discharged. Such is the record of a few days only, accidentally preserved.

Campian was stretched on the rack four different times; he was kept on that bed of torture till it was thought he had expired; yet nothing could be extracted from him which

gued any treasonable intentions, or any guilty cognisance such. Under an assurance, however, solemnly given on oath by the commissioners whose office it was to question him while on the rack, that no harm should come any whom he might mention, he disclosed the names of several gentlemen who had received him into their houses: *at oath was violated*. Every gentleman named was summoned before the council, and some of them were imprisoned and severely fined as "harbourers" of priests. Between the torturings Campian was several times called to dispute on religion with Protestant divines; conversions to the Catholic faith followed; and on one occasion two of the diocese were committed to prison on being overheard to say that Campian "was discreet and learned, and disputed very well." A nice specimen this of the right of private judgment and freedom of opinion! Elizabeth had him brought into her presence, and endeavoured to entangle him in his talk; in other words, to get him to commit himself. At length Campian, twelve other priests, and one layman, selected from different prisons, were arraigned in two separate bodies. They had come prepared openly to profess their faith, like good Catholics; to their astonishment they found themselves indicted for a conspiracy to murder the queen, to overthrow the church and state, and to withdraw the people from their allegiance. Every particular of time and place was specified; the plot was said to have been hatched at Rome and Rheims the preceding year. Well might the prisoners be surprised. Several among them had not been out of England for many years; several had never visited Rheims or Rome in their life; some had not even seen each other before they met at the bar. They protested that, whatever might be pretended, their religion was their only offence; and, in proof of the assertion, declared that *liberty had been previously offered to each individual among them, provided he would conform to the established church*. Their statement was not contradicted.

But the sentence had already passed; the trial was only mockery of justice. Not an atom of evidence was adduced to connect either Campian or his companions with the attempt against the life or the safety of the queen.

But the public mind had been prepared to believe in the existence of a conspiracy—as at the present day people swallow down any lying and self-contradictory charge against a Catholic, be he priest or layman, or one of those holy religious whose sex alone ought to be a sufficient protection against injury or slander—and the jury returned a verdict of guilty against all the prisoners. One only escaped judgment in consequence of a Protestant barrister rising in court, *after the verdict was given*, and declaring on oath that this convicted traitor had consulted him in his chambers in London on the very day that he was charged with having conspired at Rheims. The man was remanded; but the others, in spite of this damning fact, were adjudged to suffer the death of traitors. An attempt was made to save their lives out of compliment to the Duke of Anjou, who was then in London with the hope of engaging Elizabeth in a matrimonial alliance; but Cecil contended that their deaths were necessary in order to pacify the Protestants, who were in an agony of fear at the prospect of the queen's marrying a Catholic. This counsel prevailed; Campian and two others were selected for immediate execution; and suffered (Dec. 1, 1581) the frightful punishment of traitors, asserting their innocence and praying for Elizabeth with their last breath. The other nine, who were permitted to remain several months under sentence of death, were examined over and over again, and required to declare their opinions respecting the Pope's deposing power, and what part they would take in case of an attempt to put the bull into execution. Two priests and a layman gave answers which satisfied their interrogators; they saved their lives, but did not recover their liberty. The other seven replied that their opinions had nothing to do with the crime for which they had been unjustly condemned; that they were incompetent to determine the controversy between the Pope and the queen; that they believed as the Catholic Church believed, and would on all occasions behave as Catholic priests ought to behave. These answers were deemed evasive; and they all suffered at Tyburn, protesting, as their companions had already done, that they were innocent of treason, and dutiful subjects of their sovereign.

That the conspiracy was a fiction from beginning to end cannot be doubted. Their chief accuser was a Protestant, who went abroad and pretended to become a Catholic, in order to get admission into the seminaries. He was ejected for misconduct, and returned to England. Immediately on landing he was arrested, and again avowed himself a Protestant. He was now every where spoken of as a convert from Popery; and the Protestant bishops were compelled to subscribe 50*l.* a year for his maintenance, till he could be provided for in the "Church." He published what he called *Disclosures*, and a book full of calumnies against the Pope and the Seminary priests. Yet, after all, the government were afraid to produce him at the trial; and soon after he retracted his charges against the Catholic missionaries, and vindicated their innocence. In excuse for his falsehood, he said he had been seized with terror when he was led to the foot of the rack, and beheld the instruments of torture. Even his pretended "confession," as it was called, was garbled and interpolated by others, and names inserted which he had never heard. "Elizabeth herself was well known," says Camden, the Protestant annalist, "not to have believed the greater part of these unfortunate priests guilty of any designs against her or their country." "The only evidence," says Hallam, "so far as we know, or have reason to suspect, that could be brought against them, was their own admission, at least by refusing to abjure it, of the Pope's power to depose heretical princes. I suppose," he adds, "it is unnecessary to prove that, without some covert act to shew a design of *acting* upon this principle, it could not fall within the statute." No conviction for high treason could, in law or justice, be sustained against them. Hence, though he cannot altogether conquer his prejudices against Campian's "profession as a Jesuit,"—a fact which renders his judgment only the more valuable—he concludes, "Nothing that I have read affords the slightest proof of his concern in treasonable practices." So also Sir James Mackintosh, though, as a Protestant, he considers that "they inculcated obnoxious and dangerous tenets in religion," yet declares that "there was no evidence of their having conspired, or instigated conspiracy, to d

stroy or depose the queen. Some of them denied, and others equivocated, respecting the legitimacy of the queen's title as affected by the Pope's bull; but it was assuredly, as illegal as it was inhuman to hang men, even Jesuits as they were"—(here he also betrays his ignorant rancour against this noble order)—"upon mere tenets extorted from their secret consciences by the rack." Nor was this an extraordinary case: as was asserted in my last, and as these very historians allow, of all the Catholic priests who were executed under the pretence of being traitors to the state, not a single one was convicted of preaching seditious doctrines, or holding treasonable correspondence; nay, not a single one was ever proved to have, by word or writing, enforced, defended, or even so much as mentioned, the bull of deposition against Elizabeth.

But this system of "inquisition into men's private thoughts," as Hallam calls it, had been going on a long time. We have already heard of the High Commission Court,* which was set up by Elizabeth in her capacity of supreme governor of the Church, and armed with a power superior to all law, for the extinction, in fact, by every means and any means, of every form of religion but that which was established by Act of Parliament. The authority of this Court had been increasing in force every year; but in 1583 (the date at which we have now arrived) it seems almost to have reached its height. It consisted of forty-four commissioners, twelve of whom were Protestant bishops, and certain others clergymen, who were empowered to reform all heresies, schisms, errors, vices, sins, misbehaviours—in short, all acts and opinions obnoxious to the ruling powers—by fine and imprisonment at their discretion; and at its head was the Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury. The general mode of proceeding was by putting the accused person on his oath, and forcing him, by a series of artfully-devised questions, to criminate himself. But this was not the only mode of examination. The inquiry was conducted, says *Maclain*, a Protestant writer, "not only by legal methods, but by rack, torture, inquisition, and imprisonment; and

* No. 45. "How Elizabeth restored the Protestant Religion," p. 16.

the fines and imprisonment to which it condemned persons were limited by no rule but its own pleasure." We have seen how they proceeded in the case of Campian and his associates; and this was their ordinary method of transacting business. In fact, this infamous court was just nothing else than an Inquisition—by which I mean, an Inquisition such as Protestants have imagined and painted it. The Inquisition in England? Yes, my friends, in your own reformed, Protestant England, the land of light and liberty; and I will tell you a truth which I leave you to meditate upon at your leisure: the Reformation could never have been successful, the Protestant Church could never have been established, in this country without it. I am not resting on the authority of Catholic writers; I am but repeating the words of the best Protestant historians, the men who, I said at the beginning, are comparatively but little known to the mass of the people, for they are never quoted in Protestant tracts, and but rarely in (so-called) liberal speeches. Sir James Mackintosh, or his continuator, thus writes: "The queen, to restore unity in the Church, appointed as (Archbishop) Grindall's successor Whitgift, a stern inquisitor, irritated by previous controversy, and placed in his hands a commission comparable only to that celebrated tribunal which, in England, has been regarded as the most odious in the world." Mr. Hallam also, while he sees the "germ" of this court in a commission granted by Mary, towards the close of her reign, says, "but the primary model was the Inquisition itself;" and then he quotes with approval the words of a letter to Whitgift from Cecil (for even he was disgusted with the intolerance of the "archbishop"), in which he said, that "he thought the inquisitors of Spain used not so many questions to trap their prey." Even Hume declares, "it was a real Inquisition, attended with all the iniquities as well as cruelties inseparable from that tribunal. The commissioners proceeded not by information, but by rumour, suspicion, or according to their own fancy. In short, an inquisitorial tribunal, with all its terrors and iniquities, was erected in the kingdom."

This Protestant Inquisition was now in full action, and the penal laws were not allowed to sleep in the statute

book. They were "not designed," to quote Hallam once more, "merely for terror's sake, to keep a check over the disaffected, as some would pretend; they were executed in the most sweeping and indiscriminate manner, unless perhaps a few families of high rank might enjoy a connivance." True it is, that Elizabeth on one occasion proclaimed that torture should be discontinued; but this, says Mackintosh, "was to render her ministers more odious by the contrast of her own clemency; and after the false glory thus gained by her, she shut her eyes to the resumed or continued use of the horrid engine with renewed activity by her ministers. About the same time she ordered seventy priests, either under sentence of death or awaiting it, to be released from prison, the rack, and the scaffold—a fact which itself is proof sufficient of the extent and fury of the persecution. If seventy were released for the sake of a little false popularity, what had not multitudes endured of whose sufferings we shall know nothing till the last judgment?"

In 1584 Parliament again assembled; and though within the last three years scarcely a month had been allowed to pass in which the scaffolds did not stream with the blood of Catholic victims, and in several counties the prisons were filled with recusants of ancient and noble family, their enemies were not satisfied. Conscious of the miseries she had inflicted on her Catholic subjects, Elizabeth was never free from alarm, lest, like the Protestants of Scotland, France, and Flanders, whom she had assisted in rebelling against their sovereigns, the Catholics of England should take part with some invading power against herself. Accordingly she had recourse to the most disgraceful precautions to guard against surprise. "Secret emissaries," says Camden, "were spread every where abroad, to collect rumours and catch unguarded words." Many frequented foreign courts; others got admission into the English seminaries on the continent in the guise of Catholic students. Others, again, lurked about the houses of the principal gentry at home; *they pretended to be confidential friends of the Queen of Scots*; and Camden says they brought "counterfeit letters" with them, as from Mary, in the hope of entrapping persons into some act or expression which might be used

against them. Criminals and outlaws were promised not only pardon but reward for betraying Catholics; so that, adds the same writer, "innocence, even when guarded by prudence, was scarcely a security to Papists." Mackintosh also declares that it was "impossible for Catholics to live in safety. False denunciations and forged letters subjected the most conspicuous to examination before the privy council, deprivation of rights, or committal to the Tower."

This odious system of espionage and terror produced its natural fruits. Plots, real or pretended, were brought to light, and kept the nation in a state of constant ferment. 1. One Somerville, half a lunatic, rushes out into the road with a drawn sword, and swears he'll murder every Protestant in the land, and the queen herself. He is seized and lodged in the Tower; his father and mother-in-law, his wife and sister, and a missionary priest, are immediately apprehended. Arden his father-in-law, and Hall the priest, are put to the torture; the former persists in maintaining his innocence, but the latter is made to confess that he had heard his friend say he wished the queen were in heaven. On this the whole party are convicted of conspiring the queen's death, and Arden suffers as a traitor. 2. Francis, a son of Sir John Throckmorton, is suspected of treasonable correspondence: three times is he racked with no other result than a solemn protestation of his innocence. A fourth time he is led to the torture, and at the sight of the horrible instrument he loses his courage, and confesses himself privy to a plan for levying troops against the queen, and "removing her from her crown and state," unless she would consent to tolerate the Catholic worship. At his trial he declares that his confession was false; nevertheless he is condemned to death; and again, with the hope of escaping execution, he repeats his former confession—but in vain: he is led out to die, and then once more he revokes his confession, calling God to witness that it had been extorted from him by the fear of torture and the wish to save his life. 3. Parry, a Protestant, had long been employed by Cecil as a spy upon the Catholics. He pretends to become a convert to the faith, and endeavours to entrap sever

Jesuits and other priests into sanctioning the assassination of Elizabeth. Foiled in these attempts, he solicits an audience of the queen, and pretends that he had been employed by the Pope to murder her; in proof of which statement he shews her a letter from one of the cardinals, as if approving of his design; but the letter fails to support his assertion, and he is again left to his devices. At last he is caught in his own snares. He tries to inveigle one Neville, a Catholic exile (himself also a secret spy in the pay of the government), into consenting to a plot against the queen's life. It seems to have been a trial of skill between two practised rogues, which should get the other into his toils. Neville is the winner, and he denounces Parry, who is sent to the Tower. There he enters into a long and involved confession, in which he repeats his story about the Pope and the cardinal, in the hope, not only of saving his life, but of obtaining the reward he had long been seeking, which was nothing less than a pension for life for revealing so grand a conspiracy. This time the wretched impostor had outwitted himself: his confession is believed, and the judge prepares to pass sentence. At that moment, overcome with terror, the unhappy man exclaims that he is innocent; that his confession was a tissue of falsehoods extorted from him by threats and promises; that he had never harboured a thought of the murder, and that the cardinal had never given the slightest approbation to any such design. But it is too late: he is condemned to death while protesting that, if he perished, his blood would lie heavy on the head of his sovereign, who had employed him in the dangerous trade of inveigling others to destruction. On the scaffold he again declares his innocence, and again earnestly denies that the cardinal's letter had any thing in it of treasonable matter.

That designs against the government were in constant agitation, and that they were encouraged by the Pope and other Catholic powers, there is no doubt; and (as I have said all along) considering the course of cruel oppression which the queen and her ministers had chosen to pursue; I do not see what other result could justly have been expected. There may have been plots against the queen's life, but

these were the machinations of a few desperate men, not of the Catholic body as such; and certainly they received no countenance from the Pope or the authorities of the Church. Not a tittle of evidence was ever adduced to the contrary; and yet on the strength of the facts which I have just related, or rather under the influence of a vague and blinding panic which overspread the nation, the new parliament proceeded to enact a fresh set of penal laws against the Catholics, by which it was determined: 1. That all Jesuits, seminary priests, and others, born in the queen's dominions and ordained by authority from the see of Rome, if found within the realm after the expiration of forty days, should be adjudged guilty of high treason. 2. That all persons harbouring or aiding such priests should be liable to the punishment of felons. 3. That any person knowing such to be in the kingdom, and not discovering them to the proper officers within twelve days, should suffer fine and imprisonment at the queen's pleasure. 4. That all lay students in the Catholic seminaries who did not return and take the oath of supremacy (that is, turn Protestants), within six months after proclamation, should be condemned, and, when taken, executed as traitors. 5. That persons supplying such students with money or maintenance should incur a *penurie*. 6. That parents sending their children abroad without license should forfeit for every such offence one hundred pounds; and that children so sent to seminaries should be disabled from inheriting the property of their parents. Lastly, that all persons who even submitted to this act and took the required oath, should nevertheless lose the benefit of their submission, if for the space of the next ten years they presumed to come within ten miles of the place where the court was held, without special license from the queen in writing.

Before these laws received the royal assent, a large body of Catholics endeavoured to propitiate the queen by an earnest supplication. In the first place they expressed their unqualified abhorrence of the late conspiracies and treasons (for such by conviction of the accused the law held them to be). They then declared, that they held Elizabeth to be their sovereign, not only in fact, but by right; 2.

that they held it to be sinful for any one to lift up his hand against her as God's anointed; 3. that they denied it to be in the power of priest or Pope to give license to any man to do, or attempt to do, that which was sinful; 4. that they denounced the contrary opinion as devilish and abominable, heretical, and opposed to the Catholic faith. They concluded by praying they might not be suspected of disloyalty merely because they abstained, through motives of conscience, from joining in the established worship; and that her majesty would have a merciful regard to their afflictions, and refuse her assent to any law which banished their clergy from the land. You will observe that one proposition there was in this petition from which many Catholics would have dissented, viz. that Elizabeth was their sovereign *by right*, as well as *in fact*; for (as has been said above) since the issuing of the papal bull many could not in conscience hold Elizabeth to be their rightful queen though they were ready to obey her as their sovereign in all things not contrary to the law of God. But this recognition of her right on the part of the petitioners, which ought to have conciliated her favour, did not prevent her, not only from giving a peremptory refusal to their prayer, but from committing to gaol Sir Richard Shelley, who had the presumption to present it, although his "loyalty" was notorious; for (as has been already said) he had long acted as a sort of spy for Cecil on the continent. For refusing to denounce as a traitor every Catholic who upheld the Pope's deposing power, he was left to linger out his days in prison, where he died.

In the year following the act of 1584, eighteen Catholics suffered death for their religion, of which thirteen were priests, four laymen, and one a lady of good family, named Margaret Clitheroe. Her crime was that of relieving and harbouring priests; her death was one too horrible to contemplate. Refusing to be a party to her own murder, that of the priests who were arraigned with her, by plea to the indictment, she was barbarously pressed to death. Before she was laid on the floor, she and four women were with her begged on their knees that, for the sake of womanhood, she might die in her clothes; but she

refused. And so she was taken and stripped naked; and then two of his men parted her hands, which she had joined together over her face, and bound them to two posts on the ground, and her feet in like manner. A sharp stone was put under her back, and a door loaded with heavy weights was laid upon her, the pressure of which broke her ribs and forced them through the skin. In this torment she expired, being about a quarter of an hour in dying. Her husband was banished the realm; her little children, who wept and lamented for their mother, were taken and questioned about their faith, and because they answered as she had taught them, they were severely whipped; while the eldest, who was but twelve years old, was cast into prison! This instance alone is sufficient to refute the assertion which has been made, that no *woman* was put to death under the penal code; but Mrs. Clitheroe was not the only female victim.

There was a Mrs. Ward, who, for assisting a priest to escape from prison (the crime of that priest being that of saying Mass), was thrown into gaol, hung up by the hands, and cruelly scourged, and finally hanged, ripped up, and quartered, on the 30th of August, 1588. At her trial the judges asked her if she had committed the "treason" laid to her charge; to which she answered with a cheerful countenance, "Yes," and that it was a comfort to her to think she had "delivered that innocent lamb from the hands of those bloody wolves." They in vain endeavoured to terrify her into confessing where the priest was; and finding threats were useless, they then promised her pardon *if she would go to church*. But she answered that she would willingly lay down, not one life, but many, rather than sin against her conscience; and so she died with wonderful constancy and cheerfulness. In 1601 Mrs. Anne Line suffered for a like offence, at Tyburn. When she was just ready to die, she addressed the spectators with great courage: "I am sentenced to die," she said, "for harbouring a Catholic priest; and so far am I from repenting of having done it, that I wish with all my soul, that where I harboured one, I could have harboured a thousand." In 1591 Mrs. Wells received sentence of death, and died in prison. Four

other Catholic gentlewomen were condemned at different times, but reprieved, two of whom obtained pardon from James I. But this by the way : in 1587 only eight victims fell ; but the prisons were crowded, and in the following year nearly forty individuals, most of whom were priests, sealed their faith with their blood.

I have said little as yet of the Queen of Scots ; but as her sorrows and death are closely interwoven with the sufferings of the Catholics at this time, it is necessary to make some allusion to them. All the plots which had been detected, or invented, in this reign, had for their object the deliverance of Mary, and latterly also her accession to the throne of England by the dethronement of Elizabeth. We have seen already the Parliament of 1572 calling for her execution ; but ten years later an association was formed, the members of which bound themselves by oath to pursue to the death, not only every person who should attempt any harm against the queen, but any individual in whose behalf such attempt were made ; the latter clause being evidently levelled at the Queen of Scots, whose life was thus placed at the mercy of every fanatic who might choose to believe in any pretended plot against Elizabeth. The terms of this oath were now (1584) incorporated in an act of Parliament, with the exception of the atrocious clause just mentioned. By it was secured what her enemies had so long desired—the absolute exclusion of Mary from the succession in case of any confederacy or outbreak in her favour. From this moment she felt that her doom was sealed, though to any design against the person of Elizabeth she had not been, and never was, either accessory or even privy ; nay, up to this date at least, it does not appear that she had encouraged any attempts against her government. On the contrary, when the bond of association was read to her, she offered to add her own signature to the rest, so far as it was applicable to herself ; and in the beginning of the year 1585 she not only, in repeated letters to Elizabeth, solemnly protested her ignorance of any such designs, but sent out a public manifesto, signed with her own hand, in which she declared that those who should assail the life or dignity of her good sister she would regard as enemies to

herself, and would pursue them unto the death. Her life nevertheless was one of unceasing anxiety and alarm, which preyed deeply on her health and spirits. But these terrors were not confined to the unhappy Queen of Scots; they were shared by the whole body of the English Catholics, who were possessed with a conviction that nothing less was intended by the late enactments than a general massacre of such at least among them as were distinguished by their rank or fortune. Some, to escape destruction, entered into the household of Leicester, or other favourites of the queen; many abandoned their families and possessions and retired beyond seas to risk their lives in the service of foreign powers.

The natural consequence of all this was a plot, and this time, at least, a real plot against Elizabeth, which had a fatal termination, not only for its contrivers but for the royal prisoner in whose behalf it was designed. This was the Babington conspiracy, the failure of which led to the execution of the Scottish queen. Its existence seems to have been known to the government from the first, by means of the numerous spies who, feigning themselves Catholics and Mary's most zealous partisans, disclosed every circumstance as the plot proceeded; nay, every artifice was tried to draw Mary herself into the conspiracy; so that there may be truly said to have been two conspiracies—one against the life of Elizabeth on the part of certain Catholic desperadoes, and another against the life of Mary on the part of the Protestant government. Indeed it is a question whether the design against Elizabeth was not actually suggested by Sir Francis Walsingham, a member of the government, in order to procure the destruction of the Scottish queen. Suffice it to say (for I have no space to enter into the particulars of this complicated business) the plot was allowed to proceed, or rather was carried forward, by Walsingham, who used the conspirators as his tools, till the projects were ripe for detection, and proofs of Mary's participation therein were duly prepared. Every letter conveyed to or from the Queen of Scots was first delivered to Walsingham, by whom copies were taken; after which the *letter itself, or a falsified copy*, was forwarded to its address

By this contrivance the secretary was enabled to connect Mary with the conspiracy, and so to bring her to the scaffold. The object of the plot was twofold: 1. a rebellion in favour of the Scottish queen; 2. the death, or "despatch," as it was called, of Elizabeth. Of the fourteen men who were arraigned for the conspiracy, three only were for the assassination of Elizabeth; three were for the liberation of Mary by force of arms; the rest were opposed to both these projects, but kept the secret of the plot not to betray their friends. The whole were executed: Elizabeth would have had them suffer some kind of death even more barbarous and savage than the usual dreadful punishment of traitors; but on being told that such a change would be illegal, she gave up her design, though only on condition that their execution were "protracted to the extremity of pain." Oh, the womanly heart of this good and gentle queen!

The long-desired victim was now ready to be sacrificed. Mary was arraigned on the same twofold charge of having conspired to procure, 1st, an invasion of the realm, and, 2d, the death of the queen. That she was a party to the former project there can be little doubt: Elizabeth's equal, and an independent sovereign, she had every right to employ force of arms and the service of such allies as she could obtain to recover her personal liberty and effect her deliverance from the enemies by whom her life was threatened. But of the latter charge she was guiltless. She was condemned to die on the strength of forged documents, pretended copies of letters, *the originals of which were never produced*. I cannot give you here even the slightest sketch of her last sorrows and death, and the disgusting hypocrisy of Elizabeth. One only fact I will mention, which sufficiently shews the *animus* of her persecutors: she was not allowed to see a priest, to administer to her the sacraments of the Church, though she begged it as a favour in the name of Christ. They gave her a Protestant dean instead, *who pestered her to her last moments with his insulting officiousness*. Mary well knew what was the real crime for *which she suffered*; a crime, as she said, for which she was *proud to shed her blood*; it was just this—her religion.

Lord Buckhurst, who was commissioned to acquaint her with the sentence pronounced against her by her judges, and ratified by Parliament, let out the true ground of her condemnation when he bade her "*look for no mercy, for her attachment to the Catholic faith rendered her life incompatible with the security of the reformed worship.*" This was the truth of the matter, as even Protestant historians have confessed. The death of Mary was necessary for the continuance of the Protestant succession ; in other words, for the maintenance of the Protestant religion in this country.

We must now turn to the year 1588, when the famous Spanish Armada attempted the invasion of England. Many and repeated had been the insults and injuries which the King of Spain had received from Elizabeth. "She had intercepted his treasure, had given aid to his rebels, had hired foreign mercenaries to fight against his armies, and had suffered her mariners to plunder and massacre his defenceless subjects on the high seas and in his American dominions ; and all this whilst professedly at peace with him. She had sent to the relief of the Belgian insurgents an English army under a general who assumed the title and authority of governor of the revolted provinces ; and after a trial, unprecedented in the annals of Europe, she had taken, on a scaffold, the life of the Queen of Scots. The first was equivalent to a declaration of war, which Philip could not refuse to notice without the imputation of cowardice ; the second was an insult to the majesty of sovereigns, which, as the most powerful of Christian monarchs, he deemed it his duty to revenge." Sixtus V., the reigning Pope, not only bestowed his blessing on the expedition, but offered a subsidy in money as soon as the invading army should have landed on the English coast. I need not repeat what has been said at length in my former number ; for if Pius V. was justified in issuing a bull of excommunication and deposition against Elizabeth, Sixtus V. was equally justified in attempting its execution by the arms of Christian princes. Elizabeth, so far from staying her hand in the persecution of her Catholic people, had steeped it in the blood of the best and noblest in the land. She had shewn herself a merciless tyrant, worthy only of being con-

pared with those heathen emperors who, in the first ages of the gospel, had vented their rage against the Christian name by torturing and slaying all who bore it. But it was not the will of God that England should be recovered to the faith by the strong arm of power. Long ago He had revealed to one of her own royal saints, King Edward the Confessor, that this English branch of the true Church, once severed from its parent stock, should be re-united and return again to its root, the see of blessed Peter, not by any human force, but "without the help of any man's hand;" and so the attempt failed utterly, and the *invincible* Armada (as the pride of Spain had styled it) was scattered, not indeed by England's prowess, but by the "winds and storms," which "fulfil God's word."

And now, what did the Catholics of this country do? I do not ask what they might, or ought to have done, but simply what they did do. What the Protestants would have done in like case, we need not go far to seek. When they felt themselves oppressed by their Catholic king, James II., they did what ever since they have not ceased to pride themselves upon; they brought in the Dutchman William, at the head of his Dutch troops against their rightful monarch, and they set him up on the throne of these realms, cut off the Catholic succession, and established Protestant ascendancy in Church and State. If Protestants then were justified in giving liberty to themselves and their religion by the help of troops from Holland, Catholics might lawfully have done the same by the help of troops from Spain. If Protestants did well in transferring their allegiance from James to William Prince of Orange, the Catholics would equally have done well in transferring their allegiance from Elizabeth to Philip King of Spain. Nay, they would have done better; for who will say that James was an equal tyrant to Elizabeth? Did he treat his Protestant subjects as Elizabeth treated her Catholic subjects? Did he disgrace the statute-books of this realm with a series of penal laws at which humanity shudders? Did he drive his Protestant people to the Catholic churches by dint of fines and threats of life-long imprisonment? Did he make it high treason to deny the Pope's supremacy?

or inflict the terrible death of traitors on such as performed the Protestant service, or said prayers after Protestant fashion? Did he entrap, and then torture and murder Protestant ministers, and all such as harboured or relieved them? I grant you he did many arbitrary and illegal actions; but will any one pretend to say that the Protestants had as urgent reasons for leaguings with the Dutchman, as Catholics had for joining the invading armies of Spain? However, as I have said, the question here is not what the Catholics might or ought to have done, but what they did do. As a fact then, they did not join the invader; on the contrary, they sided with Elizabeth; and now mark the return they got for what both Protestant and Catholic historians have called their "loyalty and patriotism"*—more insults and worse injuries.

While the Armada was only in preparation, and even before it was ascertained that its object was the invasion of England, it was suggested by some of the queen's advisers, that all the principal Catholics in the country should be put to death. Such advice was too inhuman even for Elizabeth; but though she would not take their lives, she deprived them of their liberty. All convicted recusants were committed to safe custody: a return of "persons suspected for religion" was required from the magistrates of London; these alone amounted to 17,083, whilst the total number of persons capable of bearing arms within the same district is stated at no more than 30,000. In several counties, perhaps in all, the houses of the gentry were searched; crowds of Catholics, of both sexes and of every rank, were dragged

* Mr. Hallam, totally unconscious, as it would seem, that his intended compliment was one of the very worst insults he could offer to their religious faith and conscientiousness, observes with much simplicity, that "the Catholics, in every county, repaired to the standard of the lord lieutenant, imploring that they might not be suspected of bartering the national independence for *their religion itself*." That is to say, according to this writer, they begged it to be understood that they were ready to put by their religion—the faith of Christ, the Church He founded, that for which St. Paul counted all things else but dung—rather than let a Spaniard rule in England. This is what Protestants mean by patriotism. Christ says (Matt. vi. 33), "Seek first the kingdom of God;" Protestantism says, "Seek first the national glory—the national independence!"

to the common gaols ; and the Protestant clergy from their pulpits vehemently declaimed against the tyranny of the Pope, and the treachery of the Papists. Even this did not succeed in driving the Catholics to rebellion. "In the agony of the Protestant faith and English name," says Hallam, "they stood the trial of their spirits, without swerving from their allegiance." "Some," says Hume, "entered themselves as volunteers in the fleet or army; some equipped ships at their own charge, and gave the command of them to Protestants; others were active in animating their tenants, vassals, and neighbours to the defence of their country; while the very men whom the queen had imprisoned, addressed letters to the council, in which they spoke of Elizabeth as "their undoubted lady and queen," and expressed "their readiness to fight till death in her cause against all her enemies, were they kings, or priests, or pope, or any other potentate whatsoever."

And when the invaders were repelled, and their Armada scattered to the winds, how fared these "loyal" Catholics, who had shewn such devoted attachment to their country's queen? Surely now at last, when it was proved to demonstration that nothing was to be dreaded from their numbers, their courage, or even their desperation, if not for gratitude sake, yet out of very contempt, they would be let live in peace. Ah, little do you know the untiring hatred of Elizabeth and her Protestant advisers against the professors of the ancient faith. "She celebrated her triumph," writes Lingard, "with the immolation of human victims. A commission was issued; a selection was made from the Catholics in prison on account of religion; and six clergymen were indicted for their priestly character; four laymen for having been reconciled to the Catholic Church; and four others (among whom was Mrs. Ward, the gentlewoman before mentioned), for having aided and harboured priests. All these immediately, and fifteen of their companions, within the next three months, suffered the cruel and infamous punishment of traitors. It was not so much as whispered that they had been guilty of any act of disloyalty. On their trials nothing was objected to them but the practice of their religion."

“ From the arrival of the Armada till the death of the queen, during the lapse of fourteen years, the Catholics groaned under the pressure of incessant persecution. Sixty-one clergymen, forty-seven laymen, and two gentlewomen, suffered capital punishment for some or other of the spiritual felonies and treasons which had been lately created. Generally the court dispensed with the examination of witnesses ; by artful and ensnaring questions an avowal was drawn from the prisoner that he had been reconciled, or had harboured a priest, or had been ordained beyond the sea, or that he admitted the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Pope, or rejected that of the queen. Any one of these *crimes* was sufficient to consign him to the scaffold. Life, indeed, was always offered on the condition of conformity to the established worship (a fact which shews that the persecution was purely a religious one), but the offer was generally refused ; the refusal was followed by death ; and the butchery, with very few exceptions, was performed on the victim *while he was yet in perfect possession of his senses*.” There are several lists made at the time of priests who were thus cruelly murdered in this reign (that is, from 1573 to 1603), either for being priests or for exercising the functions of the priesthood. The lowest account puts them at 128 in all, viz. 119 secular priests, 7 Jesuits, 1 monk, and 1 friar. Moreover, 56 men and 3 women are recorded as having been executed as felons for the crime (as it was called) of harbouring and relieving priests, or other causes connected solely with religion ; besides 42 persons, clergymen and laymen, who died of their sufferings in prison. And be it remarked that the bloodiest—the most “ golden”—time of all was that which elapsed from the defeat of the Armada to the death of Elizabeth, when (as Protestants have allowed) all danger of rebellion was at an end ; and even the plea of state necessity could not be alleged in excuse for religious persecution.

But a bare list of deaths and executions, rackings and imprisonments, can give you but a very faint idea of the sufferings of the Catholics during all these years. Who shall describe the constant alarms, the torturing suspense *the mental agonies*, which were the lot, not merely of t

or that family at this or that time, but of whole multitudes of the faithful from day to day and week to week? Or who shall calculate the amount of privation, positive destitution, and ruin, which was caused by the exaction of the perpetually recurring fine for nonconformity? The horrors of the rack, the halter, and the ripping-knife affected, by comparison, but a small portion of the Catholic population; *this* was the grievance which pressed on all. None but men of ample fortune could afford to pay a fine of 20*l.* thirteen times a year: most of the gentry were forced to sell large portions of their estates to meet the continual demand; and if they fell into arrears, the queen, as we have seen, had power to seize their goods and lands every six months. Escape was impossible: the government constantly called for fresh returns of the names and property of recusants; and the only expedient was to get some favourite to persuade the queen to accept a yearly composition instead of the monthly fines—an indulgence, however, which was much disliked by the heads of the Established Church. But even thus they were not safe from exactions. Every time they heard Mass, you must remember, they were liable to a year's imprisonment and a fine of 100 marks; indeed they might think themselves lucky if they were let off so easy, for it all depended on the particular statute under which they were indicted, whether they were mulcted in their goods, imprisoned for life, or hanged as felons. If there were but a rumour of invasion, they were confined, at their own charges, in the county gaol, were separately taxed to levy soldiers, and on being discharged from prison, were either forced to remain in the custody of Protestants, or, if allowed to return home, forbidden to stir more than five miles from their own doors. This was the law of 1593, by which it was ordered that all Popish recusants above sixteen years of age should repair, within forty days, to their usual place of dwelling, and there remain; nor dare to go five miles from home without a *written* license from the bishop of the diocese, or deputy-Lieutenant of the county, on pain of forfeiting their goods and the profits of their lands for life.

Thus it was with men of property. The poorer Catho-

lics were at first thrown into prison ; but the gaols became so crammed, and so many complaints were made of the expense of their maintenance, that the queen at last ordered them to be discharged as the magistrates might see fit. From some nothing more was required than a promise of good behaviour, that is, of coming to the Protestant Church on Sundays ; some had their ears bored with a hot iron ; others were publicly whipped. The numbers were so great that, at one sessions in Hampshire 400 recusants, and at the assizes in Lancashire 600, were presented. Cooper, "Bishop" of Winchester, humbly petitioned the queen that "a hundred or two lusty men, well able to labour, might be sent into Flanders as pioneers and labourers for the armies!" But in 1593 it was enacted that all recusants, not possessing twenty marks a year, should conform, within three months after conviction, or leave the country, under the penalty of felony if they were found afterwards at large. This was a happy expedient for getting rid of those out of whom no money could be got ; but its injustice was too monstrous to be regularly acted upon, and the magistrates contented themselves with visiting particular districts from time to time, and levying such sums as they pleased from the poorest Catholics in place of the whole legal fine.

The domiciliary visits not only continued, but became far more frequent. The priest-catchers would force their way into the houses of the Catholics at any hour of the day or the night, on any mere idle suspicion—as, for instance, the arrival of some one who was unknown to the neighbours ; or at the instance of some enemy of the family, simply for the sake of insult and annoyance—often, indeed, for the sole purpose of plunder, or with the hope of getting the reward which was offered for the apprehension of a priest. It was thus impossible for English Catholics to live in peace in their own country, however secluded or harmless their lives might be ; and they could not retire to a foreign land without forfeiting their estates. In 1584 fifty gentlemen's houses were entered on the same night, and almost all the owners dragged off to prison. Cooper, the Protestant "bishop" just mentioned, wished the

visits to take place every three weeks or month ! This wish of the good prelate, though it was not executed to the letter, was satisfactorily fulfilled in the spirit, as you may convince yourselves by reading some of the narratives written at the time, which have since been printed ;* nor is there an old Catholic family in the country which does not possess records of similar outrages, in which their relatives were sufferers in this reign, as well as in those which followed. As late as 1591 the queen issued a proclamation ordering all householders to make returns of every single person who had entered their doors for the last twelve months, and to declare whether they knew of any one who absented himself from the Protestant service. A general order was at the same time given to search for missionary priests, and such as had been reconciled to the Church, or, as the preamble expressed it, " withdrawn from their allegiance," by their means.

With an allusion to Elizabeth's last act towards her Catholic subjects, I must now conclude this history. The Catholics towards the close of her reign were divided in opinion as to who should be the queen's successor : some were for Mary's son, James king of Scotland (who, in fact, at Elizabeth's death, became king of England) ; others were for his cousin, Arabella Stuart. Disputes arose among them about ecclesiastical affairs, which were referred to Rome. The government secretly supported the former party, because they regarded it as the more " patriotic " of the two, that is, less devoted to the Pope, and more subservient to the state. But no sooner did the Puritans get a hint of what was going on, than they accused the ministry of a design to tolerate the Catholic religion. To repudiate at once so shocking an idea, Elizabeth sent out a proclamation, in which she divided the Catholic clergy into two parts ; one, that of the Jesuits and their friends, the other that of the secular priests, and commanded the former to depart out of the kingdom within thirty days ; but graciously accorded to the latter the longer space of three months. Any priest found in England at the end of these

* See, for instance, those given in Dodd's Church History, vol. v. Tierney's edition.

respective periods was to die a traitor's death, as the law directed. At the same time she complained that, in consequence of her clemency (!) to both these classes of men, they had even dared "to walk the streets at noonday," and had otherwise so demeaned themselves as to breed a suspicion that she proposed to *grant a toleration of two religions*, though God knew she was ignorant of any such imagination. A set of special commissioners, with the "archbishop" at their head, was appointed (January 1603) to carry the royal orders into effect, who had power to call before them every priest they pleased, whether he were in prison or at large, and without observing any of the usual forms of trial, to banish him the kingdom under such conditions as they might choose to name. Such was the state of misery to which the Catholics were reduced, that, tyrannical as these proceedings were, yet simply because a difference was made between one class and another, and a certain discretion left to the judges as to the conditions to be imposed, they were hailed by many as the beginning of better things! Once more was a "loyal address" sent up to the queen, in the hope of obtaining some little meed of justice; but it never reached her hands. Elizabeth was on her death-bed, dying as those only can die who have faith in nothing. She could not—how could she?—believe in the religion she had herself established; a blank despair had settled on her soul; frightful visions haunted her; she felt herself in the grasp of some evil thing, from which there was no escaping. Almost her last words were, "I am tied with an iron collar about my neck: I am tied, and the case is altered with me."

I have had but one object in this and the two preceding Tracts—to shew you that the persecution which the Catholics of England endured in this reign was essentially a *religious* persecution. For this reason I have scrupulously adhered to the order of events, from which it is manifest that Elizabeth was no sooner on the throne than she began to threaten and coerce her Catholic people, who not only *acknowledged* her title from the first, but *conducted themselves as peaceful and unoffending subjects*. I

the Pope at length laboured to depose her, it was because she was a tyrant and a persecutor of the faith. If, as time went on, many plotted and rebelled against her, it was because of her increasing cruelty. But what I would most insist upon is this, that religious toleration was not, as people fancy, a principle of the so-called Reformation; that, on the contrary, Elizabeth established Protestantism in this country by making the profession of the Catholic faith felony by law, and enforcing that law in the most ruthless manner. To say, as Protestant writers have said, that the priests and others, whom she put to death for saying or hearing Mass, were executed for treason, and not purely for their religion, is a wicked falsehood, or a disingenuous quibble. "Treason," says Hallam, "by the law of England, and according to the common use of language, is the crime of rebellion or conspiracy against the government. If a statute is made by which the celebration of certain religious rites is subjected to the same penalties as rebellion or conspiracy, would any man free from prejudice, and not designing to impose upon the uninformed, speak of persons convicted on such a statute as guilty of treason, without expressing in what sense he uses the words, or deny that they were as truly punished for their religion, as if they had been convicted of heresy? A man is punished for religion when he incurs a penalty for its profession or exercise, to which he was not liable on any other account. This is applicable to the great majority of capital convictions on this score under Elizabeth. The persons convicted could not be traitors in any fair sense of the word, because they were not chargeable with any thing properly denominated treason."

LONDON :

PRINTED BY ROBSON, LEVEY, AND FRANKLYN,
Great New Street and Fetter Lane.

Entertaining and Instructive Library.

PREACHING THE GOSPEL

DEFENSIBLE ONLY ON CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES.

A DIALOGUE HELD IN THE STREETS OF BRISTOL.



By Permission.

LONDON:
BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.
READER, PARK STREET, BRISTOL.

Preaching the Gospel, &c.

"WHAT'S the good of parsons? or dissenting preachers either, for the matter of that?" so said Joe Baker as he came out of St. G——'s, Bristol, one fine Sunday morning, after hearing a discourse from the Rev. Martin Clacker, the incumbent thereof.

"What *can* you mean?" asked his companion, Tom Sloker, a grave, heavy-looking man, who had sat under Mr. Clacker's ministry for some dozen years and more.

Baker. Why, didn't you hear what the gentleman was talking about up in the pulpit yonder?

Tom Sloker was silent; for, if the truth must be told, he had sat so long under Mr. C.'s ministry, that he had got into a habit of taking a quiet nap while its functions were proceeding.

Meeting with no response, therefore, Joe Baker followed up the flow of his own thoughts: "Didn't he say the Bible was the only word of God, the only teacher of saving truth; that we must get our religion out of that precious book, and not from the teaching of men? And when he had said all this, and pitched into the Catholics for making so much of their Church and their priests, as if the Bible God had given us wasn't sufficient of itself, didn't he go on for near an hour by the gallery clock delivering, as he called it, the blessed truths of the Gospel, and as good as telling us we should be damned to all eternity if we didn't think just as he did on the subject? Now what I say is this, if his doctrine is true, and the Bible is the only thing we've got to look to, what business *has* he to set himself up to teach us? I declare it seems to me a great piece of impertinence, to say the least of it."

Sloker. Well, but a minister, I suppose, must preach the word of God, for the Bible says so.

B. Very like; but just think a moment what you're saying, my good fellow. Do you mean his preaching is the word of God? If you do, then there are two words of God—the Bible's word and the preacher's word.

S. But if the word the minister preaches is the same word as is written in the Bible, there are not two words, but one word and the same word.

B. That's a good 'un! You remind me of a sermon I heard at Bath, when I was working there a little while ago. The gentleman was shewing, as he said, the office of a Christian minister; and this was to "hold forth the word of life" (Phil. ii. 16). "Here," cried he, "is the word of life," taking up a large Bible; "and now I hold it forth to you, my dear brethren," and at the same time he stretched out his hand with the book in it as far as he could reach. So far, so good; he had done his best, I thought, and shewn the people the volume where they would find the truth. But this wasn't what he meant at all; for then he went on *holding forth* in quite a different sense, and "the word of life" was no longer the Bible, but his own discourse. The absurdity of the thing struck me at the time; for, among other things, he said a great deal about "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15). Now, thinks I, if he's true to his duty, he'll give us all a page or two out of the Bible to take with us home. But no such thing; on he went, giving us what he called the application of the word—all out of his head, mind you—to the state of our souls. In point of fact, you see, he puzzled up two things together, the Bible and his own sermon, and called them both "the word of truth" and "the word of life;" and this is just what you've done. But surely you're sharp enough to see that the Bible is one thing, and a man's sermon another thing. It isn't the Bible he preaches, but his own word; and as you say, the Bible is the *only* word of God, what he preaches is not God's word, but man's word.

S. Still, I say, if a preacher means the same thing as the Bible means, he says the same thing as the Bible, though he puts it in different words.

B. But what right has he to put it in different words

How can we be sure, to begin with, that he understands what the Bible means? And even supposing what he agrees with the Bible, what right has he to put a gloss on the words of the Bible, and call his meaning the 'word of Christ.' This is what I stick to: if his doctrine is true, the Bible is true, what business has he to get up and contradict his meanings, instead of the pure word without comment.

S. But the Bible must have its meanings, Baker.

B. True enough; and what we want is the meanings, which are God's meanings, not Mr. Clacker's or any body else's.

S. Still the Bible does say, "Preach the word. Woe be to me if I preach not the Gospel." I remember Mr. Clacker saying this last was an awful text for him.

B. Well, all I say is, if there are two Gospels written in the Bible and one preached by men, I may say so, and I can understand him; but don't let him say the Bible is the only word of God, and then contradict his own word instead. What do we want with him if the Bible alone is the word of God and able to stand by itself?

S. But how are we to know the Bible is the word of God, and we must all go to it to learn the truth, if no body isn't appointed to tell us?

B. That's true; and if Mr. Clacker and the other men did nothing but this, their doctrine about the Bible would so far be sensible enough. I should think I might believe what they said; but they say one thing one day and do the very contrary the next.

S. How so?

B. Why is there any preacher in the world who goes on week after week trying to shew you that the Bible is what he says it is, and then leaves you to yourself to find out its meaning? Does he say, "Now, my good friends, I have proved to you that the Bible is the word of God, the only word of God, the only teacher of truth; take heed, study it; meditate upon it with humility and pray for me, myself, I am but a fallible man and a sinner. I am your teacher; my word is not God's word; my

not the Gospel. The inspired word of truth requires help from me or from man's wit; my mission is done when once I have persuaded you to take the Bible for your teacher. All I can now say is, read it, ye who can; for ye who cannot, I have provided Bible-readers, whose duty it is, not to expound or explain—oh, awful delusion of the benighted Papists!—but simply to read; to read ye slowly and clearly, but without laying stress upon words, for fear they should bias your minds—the pure unadulterated word of God.” Now, Sloker, answer like a man: Is this what your parson says? or if he says it, does he keep his word?

S. I may certainly have heard him talk in this fashion, but I shouldn't say as he kept to it.

B. No, nor none of 'em either. They don't believe what they say about the Bible. Sunday after Sunday, and perhaps once a week besides, they unlock the great church gates or the meeting-house door, and tell the people to come and hear the Gospel; and then up gets a man into the pulpit and preaches a sermon of his own composing or somebody else's, and this they call “preaching the word.” In your mind you, they would be mightily offended, and set you down as a very unspiritual person, if you were content with a chapter or two out of the Bible, which nevertheless they tell you is the only word of God. To my thinking, it's all just so much humbug.

S. There is one thing certainly that does look very awkward, I confess. There's Mr. Grinder, the reader, has a precious little pay and is very little thought of, though every body says he's a most respectable man; yet if the Bible's God's way of teaching the world, it's he must be the great propagator of the Gospel, for he deals out many long yards of text from one year's end to another, when you went up Wednesday evening lecture and all. To be sure Mr. Clacker has his Bible class—

B. Where, I suppose, *he* reads a verse and *they* read a verse, and then they shut up their books and go away—is that it?

S. Oh, no. Mr. Clacker gives the young people Bibles: he teaches them, as you may say, out of the Bible.

B. Yes, out of the Bible, true again ; for what he says isn't in the Bible, but something outside of it, and all beside it too, for what you or I know. In fact the Bible not being clear enough in Mr. Clacker's opinion—though when it suits him to say so, he'll tell you the contrary—this only teacher of saving truth not being able to teach by itself, he kindly lends it a helping hand. Mr. Clacker teaches his class, and pretends all the time that the Bible is teaching them. Mr. Clacker teaches the young people, and would have them imagine they are being taught by God. Mr. Clacker expounds the Scriptures, and would have the people believe that his exposition, that is to say, the sense he puts on a text, is the genuine word of God. Mr. Clacker delivers a sermon, and sends his hearers away with the delusion that they have been listening to the pure gospel of Christ. This is the fact ; and it's wonderful we should have been imposed upon so long. They say the Bible is the only word of God, and yet they say the sermons of their favourite preacher are also the word of God ; which is just so much nonsense, and worse than nonsense, for it makes a joke of revelation altogether.

S. That's strong language, Baker. I never knew you cared so much about these things before.

B. I don't know as I ever thought so much about the matter till to-day ; but the more I do think about it, the more absurd the whole business appears.—[*After a pause.*] I declare it seems to me positively *wicked* for these men to go on preaching and teaching, lecturing and expounding of Scripture, while all the time they lay it down we are to be taught by the Scripture alone, and not by any creature whatever. If God says the Bible is our only teacher, isn't it wicked for a man to interfere and try to teach us instead ?

S. I suppose all they want is to help us to understand what the Bible teaches.

B. What ! the Bible wants their help, does it ? The Bible isn't sufficient after all, as they say it is, eh ? If it really isn't sufficient by itself to teach us, and God never meant it to be sufficient, all well and good : let them say so outright, and tell us, if they can, who our teachers are

at right they have to teach, and how we can be
 ey teach what's true. But what I say is, if the
 nd the Bible only, is our teacher, it cannot be right
 to put themselves in the Bible's place, or what you
 lp it to teach.

Well, but their teaching needn't prevent your tak-
 Bible for your teacher, and getting truth out of it
 rself. You needn't believe what they tell you ;
 take their word for what it's worth and nothing
 So you're none the worse off, as I see.

That's just what I deny. It's a good joke certainly
 an to get up in that solemn manner, and after say-
 he Word of God says this and the Word of God
 it," to end all by informing us we needn't believe
 le he has been saying. Did you ever know Mr.
 or any body else, wind up his sermon in this way ?
 d be worth going to hear : a man would make a
 himself and no mistake, putting Almighty God out
 uestion altogether. And as for not being bound to
 what they say, you needn't tell me that : a man
 believe a hundred contradictory things together,
 se gentlemen are always contradicting each other,
 mselves into the bargain. My wonder is that people
 ny thing at all : it's seldom enough they say down-
 at you're to believe and what you're not to believe ;
 ne man speaks plain, the next calls him a liar, or
 ng as bad.

Still, I say, you've no call to go by what they tell
 l so you're none the worse off.

Yes, I *am* the worse off, and we are all the worse
 arsons and preachers, if their doctrine about the
 ily is true. Besides, if we weren't the worse off,
 o excuse for them. What business have they to
 bias my mind one way or the other way ? If the
 my teacher and my only teacher, what right have
 put in their word and say, " Joe Baker, this text,
 means so and so ; it means we are justified by faith
 d good works are just no good at all ; and yo
 is is God's holy word, and so, Mr. Baker, yo
 d if you don't hold to it." What business h

man to try and intimidate me into putting this or that meaning on the word of God, when he says himself I must get my belief out of the Bible and no where else? Tell me I needn't be biased by him!—why in the world does he talk in this way, if he doesn't intend me to be biased by him? And for the matter of that, one cannot help being biased by what one hears, specially when it's put so strongly, and other people about you say the same sort of thing. Look at this very doctrine about the Bible only: absurd as I'm getting to see it is, what a hold it has had on my mind, and on every body's about me; and whether it's true, or whether it isn't, it cannot be denied that it's all through its being dinned into us from the time we were that high—*[holding his hand a couple of feet from the ground]*—that we ever so much as thought of it. We didn't get it out of the Bible, did we, Sloker?

S. No, I can't rightly say when I first heard tell of it. I remember thinking it as long as I remember any thing about such matters.

B. Well, that's just what I say about all the rest of it,—what we believe and what we don't believe. If we do believe a thing, it is because we've been taught it; and if we don't believe a thing, it is because we've been told it was Popery, or something of that sort. Not one word of it did we get out of the Bible. Now tell me, Sloker, do you think Mr. Clacker got his religion out of the Bible? Did he open his Bible, knowing nothing of what was in it, and by reading straight on from Genesis to Revelation teach himself Christianity?

S. No, I suppose he got what he believes as the rest of us got it, it's not easy to say how, but just as we get all our other notions, by mixing with people, and picking up what they think without knowing it.

B. Just so, Sloker: you've hit the nail on the head. I don't believe such a thing as a Bible-taught Christian *ever existed*. Bible or no Bible, it's plain to me that people *don't get their religion out of it, and can't if they would*. Why your father and mother, and uncles and aunts, and every body round you, if they have any religion at all, and know any thing about it, are sure to give you some no

tions, right or wrong, before you're able or fit to have opinions of your own. In fact, the better Christians they are, and the more they think and speak about religion, the less can a child be a Bible-taught Christian. They teach him themselves, and they send him to school, and they take him to church or to meeting; and if they didn't do this, a child's ears are always open, and he'll catch up a word here and a word there, wherever he is and whoever he's with, as you were saying just now; and long before he can read the Bible, or understand it if he can read it, he has got his notions about religion, and these notions he takes with him to the Bible, and the Bible, when he opens it, just means to him what he has been taught, or has heard before. What he has heard outside colours what he sees within; and the words of the Bible mean to him what he has heard people say they mean. At any rate it's quite clear he goes to the Bible with a biased mind; he may fancy he's quite independent and free from all prejudices, but his old notions stick to him like his skin, and anyhow it's impossible to deny the fact, that he wasn't from the first a Bible-taught Christian.

S. Mr. Clacker would say, that only shews how necessary it is to teach a child to read his Bible as early as possible.

B. That's no answer to what I've been saying; but take it as it stands. Do you mean to say any Christian parent would leave his child to spell out his religion for himself? Would he think he was doing his duty by him? I should like to see Mr. Clacker's countenance if one of his children were to say to him, "Papa, I wish to be a Bible Christian; so I won't listen to a word *you* say to me, for you're only a man; I won't say any more lessons to Aunt Jemima, for I can't help thinking of what she tells me, and she is but a woman, and I'm afraid, if she goes on teaching me, I shall get to believe what she says, and then I should not be taught by my Bible; and the Bible, you know, is my teacher. And I won't learn the creed or say my catechism any more, or go to church either, unless I may come away *before sermon*; and when I'm in the drawing-room *you mustn't say any thing about religion*; and I wish

would bid nurse hold her tongue, and not tell me stories out of the Gospels, for I won't be taught by any thing but my Bible." How would papa look, and what would he say, at such a schooling as this, eh, Stoker?

S. How he would look, or what he would say, I can't tell; but I know what I should *do* if I had such an imp for *my* child.

B. Well, as it is with a child, so it is, as it seems to me, with grown-up people. When a man who knows little or nothing takes to being religious, and wishes to learn the truth, he doesn't shut himself up alone with a Bible, does he? Not he: he goes and hears some preacher, who, he says, does him good, and he talks to friends, and he reads good books. Some notions he has, few and odd as they may be; and these, together with what he hears, make him inclined to believe this, and not to believe that, to think the Bible says this and doesn't say that, or says some one thing very plain, and over and over again, so that he meets with it read where he will; and other things, that are as plain to somebody else, he doesn't see at all; or maybe he reads the Bible the contrary way altogether, and sees that it condemns and denies what his neighbour thinks a very great truth. These things are facts—you know they are facts; and the more I look at them, the more I see that this doctrine we've been taught about the Bible doesn't hold good. Nobody goes to the Bible *first* for his religion; whatever people may say or fancy, they don't *learn* their religion out of it, and they don't take it for their teacher: they can't if they would. Good people, the very people who call themselves Bible Christians, won't let them. The parsons won't let them, and the dissenting preachers won't let them: they are always telling them, this is so, and that is not so; the Bible says this, and the Bible doesn't say that; and if people go to the Bible at all, it is to *prove* something *they've* already been taught, or to *disprove* something *they've* not been taught and do not wish to believe.

S. I tell you what, Baker, people will say you're *nothing* better nor an infidel, if you go on talking in this *fashion*.

B. No, Sloker, by God's help I'll never be that; I'm not going to give up my belief in the Bible; but what I want is, to find out for certain what God would have us believe. If He has given us His word, it strikes me He must have given us some plain way of knowing what it means, and making us sure that we know it.

S. Well, the Catholics seem sure enough, so you had better go and try them; though, mind you, you'll be a marked man ever after, and nothing will be too bad for people to say of you.

B. It's no matter to me what people say. To be sure, I know about as little of Catholics as other people do, and that's little enough, and all by hearsay; but if they can give me what I want, and tell me how to get hold of the truth, I shall be glad to hear what they've got to say.

S. Then you're in luck's way, for here comes one of them; so I'll bid you good morning, for it won't do for me to be seen in close fab with a man as is known to be a Papist; I've a wife and family to support, and I can't afford to offend the gentlefolks by—

B. Following your conscience, and seeking to save your soul. That's what they call religious liberty, is it?

II.

Exit Tom Sloker, and enter our old friend* John Smith the mason. He was going on his way, after giving Joe Baker, with whom he was slightly acquainted, a passing nod, when the latter stopped him by saying:

"I say, Smith, I want to ask you some questions about your religion."

"Ask away, then," replied John, "if you're only in earnest; for I've no desire to talk on such things for the sake of talking, and so I tell you at starting."

B. I'm in earnest, Smith—I am indeed. I don't know how it is, but I seem to myself to have a sight of something I never saw before, though I don't yet see my way clean through; but perhaps you can help me.

S. Well, what is it?

* No. 10. "Our Parish Churches, as they were and as they are."

B. Why, I have been hearing parson Clacker preaching about the Bible being the only way for people, rich and poor, and all alike, to get at the truth; and to make a long story short, I've been working the thing out in my own mind, till I've come to see two or three things as plain as I ever saw any thing in my life. One thing I see is, that these preachers preach their own doctrine and call it the word of God; and when they talk of the Bible, they don't really mean the Bible, but the meaning they put on such texts as they chance to like best. Another thing I see is, that if the Bible is what they say it is, we don't want their teaching at all; and more than that, they have no *right* to set themselves up to teach us, and try to make us take their word as if it were God's word. If they believe what they tell us about the Bible, they are doing a wicked thing to bias our minds and unfit us for judging for ourselves, shoving themselves in between our souls and God's truth, as if neither we nor God Himself could do without them. And another thing I see is, that let alone parsons and preachers, a man can't go and learn from the Bible only, even if he would: it isn't in the nature of things as God has made them. The people we live amongst have got their notions, and they give their notions to us when we are little ones; and the more notions they have, and the better their notions are, the worse it is for us; for we are taught so much more before we get to the Bible, and the Bible they tell us is God's way, and His only way of teaching. Why, if I were to begin now, and try to get my religion out of the Bible, every word as I could put any meaning on would mean to me just what I've picked up at home and at school, and from the people I've lived amongst. And then the preachers as I've heard—to be sure they mostly talk in such a roundabout way that it's hard to understand what they're at; but supposing they were to speak plain, why, as I read the Bible, instead of letting God tell me from His own word what He would have me *believe and do*, I should be telling Him, as I may say, *what these preachers had taught me*.

"Yes," said Smith, laughing, "if Mr. Clacker is true o his doctrine, he ought to think it very shocking that if

you chanced to hit on his Sunday's text, you should remember what he, poor mortal, had told you it meant, instead of listening in your heart to the word itself teaching you."

B. Then you agree with what I've been saying?

S. I do; but so far, you perceive, you've only been knocking down your old Protestant notions; but you mustn't stop there, or you'll have no religious *belief* at all, which is the case with thousands in this country. They have got to see that Protestantism is a sham; but they're as ignorant as ever of the true Church, and don't seem to care to know any thing about it.

B. I quite see what you mean, and feel it too; and it's what I was coming to: now, can you Catholics give us the *real thing* instead of the sham? Can you give us a preached word that is God's word? for this is what neither parsons or Dissenters can do. Their word, you see, not being God's word, isn't to be trusted, and only serves to puzzle and tease us. Can you give us a teacher as can teach, and does teach, all alike, rich and poor, men, women, and children, learned and unlearned, clever and stupid,—a teacher who has a right to teach because God appointed him to teach?

S. I'm neither a priest nor a doctor of the Church, nor am I much of a scholar either; but a few plain things can tell you, and so perhaps help you to the truth.

B. That's all I want. I see what's not, as I may say, now give me a glimpse of what is.

S. Well, I'll try and take up your thoughts as far as they've gone, put them into a Catholic shape, and see what they stand for. You believe the Bible to be, as indeed it is, an inspired book, or rather, as I should say, a collection of inspired books; but you see that, as a matter of fact, the Word of God, or what is so called, comes to us through the lips of men. This the Protestants themselves confess in their practice, though they deny it in theory; they do not leave men to read the Bible for themselves, they teach and preach, and call what they teach and preach the "Word of God," the "Gospel of Christ;" and what more can they say?

B. Exactly so; they give evidence against themselves you may say.

S. Yes, and not only so, but they witness to a great Catholic truth, and it is this, that the Church, and not the Bible, is our teacher. The Church preaches the Word, the Church publishes the Gospel, the Church feeds her children both with milk and with strong meat. If men would learn the truth as it is in Jesus, they must seek it from the mouth of His ministers: this is God's way of teaching His creatures what He would have them believe and do.

B. I see. You Catholics do in an open, straightforward way what Protestants do in a double-faced manner, looking one road and going another, as if we shouldn't see what they were about. You do what you say, and you mean what you say, and you keep to it.

S. Our principles and our practice agree together, that's certain, and both are borne out by facts; but Protestants go against facts and against their own principles too. Can any thing be more absurd, or more contrary to facts, than to say God intended mankind to learn the truth and save their souls by reading the Bible? Why, at this very day, in this very country, in spite of so much being done about schools for the poor, there are multitudes who don't know their letters, and multitudes more who can't make out two words together; and pray, how were people to read the Bible before printing was invented, and when there was no way of making copies of the Bible but by writing them out with the hand? What a notion Protestants must have of God's wisdom and goodness to think He would give mankind a revelation, and leave them for 1500 years without any certain means of knowing what it was He had revealed!

B. The thing contradicts itself. Besides, if Bible reading is the only way of knowing the Christian religion, Christianity didn't begin, as you may say, till Bibles were printed.

S. Yes, and the Christians we read of in the Bible, and who are said (Acts xi. 26) to have been "first named Christians at Antioch," were not rightly called Christians at all: *they didn't get their religion from the Bible; they were not "Bible Christians," and therefore they knew nothing of the true Gospel, and were not taught by God's Word; in fact they hadn't it, if this Protestant notion holds good.*

B. How do you make that out?

S. Clear enough. The Gospel was preached, and thousands were added to the Church before a single line of the New Testament was written; and whole nations believed, and multitudes suffered and died for the faith, before the books of which the New Testament is made up were gathered into a volume as they are now.

B. That's a puzzler for Protestants certainly. The Christians we read of in the Bible hadn't the Bible, if by Bible they mean the New Testament as well as the Old. They were converted to the Gospel without the Gospel, if the New Testament alone be the Gospel, as Protestants say; is.

S. Just so. They were converted, as the world from first to last has been converted, by what St. Paul calls (1 Cor. i. 21) "the foolishness of preaching;" by the teaching of men set apart for the purpose. In short, they were converted by the Church, not by the Bible.

B. That's a strong fact; and I don't see how it's possible for Protestants to get over it.

S. They can't get over it really; but some say one thing and some say another; for as they have no faith to stand upon, they speak at random, and never agree. One thing they say is, that the Bible, when it was put together, did instead of the Church.

B. But who put the Bible together, and fixed what was inspired and what was not?

S. The Church.

B. Well, did the Church say that the Bible was come in its stead?

S. Quite the contrary. Then, as now, the Church claimed to be the teacher sent by God and guided by His spirit to teach the truth.

B. Then what are their facts? Did God work a miracle and multiply Bibles as He did bread in the desert? and did He make men able to read them when they had got them, as He made His preachers speak all languages on the day of Pentecost? If He did none of these things, then I suppose He left men where they were, with the same teachers and the same means of learning the truth as they had.

fore. Was the New Testament written in all languages, Smith?

S. No, it was written mostly in Greek.

B. Then the Bible they give us isn't the real Bible after all. Did God inspire men to translate it?

S. No; it was translated by the Church; and it's been translated also by Protestants.

B. Why, there again, how are we to be sure it has been translated aright?

S. You can't be sure about it at all, unless you trust the Church, who received the Bible from those who wrote it, and preserved it whole and entire, and handed it down from age to age. And more than that, the Church has the key that opens its meaning; this it has ever claimed, and has never changed its tone or wavered an instant.

B. Then what are their facts for this notion of theirs about the Bible?

S. Just none at all. The Bible says nothing of such a change of system; it never says it had come to teach in the Church's place; on the contrary, it supposes the Church to go on preaching and teaching to the end of the world; and it speaks most strongly of the authority of the Church's rulers, bidding men obey them as being set over them by the Lord, and standing to them in His place. If there is one thing in the Bible which any man that runs may read, it is this; in fact, there was no such change as these Protestants please to imagine. They can't produce one tittle of evidence in favour of any thing of the kind.

B. And yet what a wonderful change it would have been! One day a man must "hear the Church" and believe and obey what it says; and the next day the Bible has come in, and he needn't care for the Church any longer. All he has to do is to take his Bible into a corner and read for himself; indeed, he is bound to do so, if the Bible has come to be his teacher instead of the Church.

S. Yes; and if a man were to do as they tell him, if he *were really* to try and teach himself by the Bible only, he'd soon find out the Bible wasn't meant to be used in such a way, and that he was turning it to a purpose God never intended it for. Of course, God might, if He pleased, have

inspired every one of us to read and understand the Bible, as He inspired the writers to write it; if He had wished it to be our teacher, He could have made it so, that's quite another thing. But He didn't make it so, or every body as studied it would understand it alike, just as Catholics do the teaching of the Church.

B. At any rate your preachers, the "ministers of the Gospel," as they call themselves, and all your real Bible-Christians (if such people existed), would agree among themselves, instead of quarrelling and fighting together as they do now.

S. Except when they back each other up in abusing the Catholic Church. However, I say the Bible, on the face of it, isn't a book for those who know little or nothing about Christ and His religion, but for such as have been well taught and grounded in it before. It says so itself; even the Gospels, which give an account of our Blessed Lord's Life and Death, were written for those who were already "instructed" (Luke i. 4), and of course by the Church. The Epistles, again, were "Letters" written to those who were already converted, and who, besides, had teachers to explain what the writers of them meant. What St. Paul or St. Peter wrote wasn't thrown among the people for them to make what they could of it. Well, all this shews that the New Testament wasn't intended to be the sort of instruction-book which Protestants fancy; and a proof of it is that they themselves have had to make books for children and books for the poor, and to write the Gospels over afresh, as I may say, in their own words, bringing a piece from this quarter and a piece from that, all to *make the Bible an easier book and a better teacher than God Almighty made it.*

B. Pretty respect they shew to God and His Word; but this is the kind of thing they do every day, and all the while they keep crying, "The Bible, the Bible, whole and entire, the pure, unmutilated Word of God."

S. Here, then, again you see what Protestants do without principle, the Catholic Church does on principle. *The Church makes use of books and of every other means that comes to hand; but she, and she only, is our teacher.*

Catholics are taught, not merely the same words, but the same thing. We don't merely repeat the same creed, but we understand it in the same sense. We not only believe the Bible to be the Word of God, but we all believe what the Bible says in one and the same way; in fact, we agree in the *sense* of the Bible, while the most Protestants do is to agree in the *words*. They take the words and put *their own* meaning on them, and call their own meanings God's Word.

B. Yet surely God's Word cannot have a hundred contradictory meanings if it is His Word; it cannot mean what you, or I, or Jack Robinson may please to think it means.

S. But look at what comes from our taking the Church and not the Bible as our teacher and guide. Catholics are the only people who agree together in unity; they're the only people who have "one faith," and their ministers are the only men who are able to teach the whole world, for they only have one and the same doctrine. It isn't merely here in England, or Ireland, or Scotland, though this would be wonderful enough, but all over the world, and in every country of the world, wherever there are Catholics, they all believe alike. Millions in number, they are one in doctrine and belief; their teachers teach the same thing, and the people believe the same thing. "Many men, many minds," is a proverb in the world; but in the Catholic Church many men have one mind; whatever else they differ about, in faith they are all one.

B. That's a great fact, and Protestants would think it a most wonderfully fine thing if we could say the same thing of this country. Why, only fancy a single town, like Bristol here, having one faith; it *would* be a miracle! Parsons and Dissenters, rich and poor, little and big, all worshipping together and believing the same thing.

S. Yet this was really the fact even in Bristol, and in all England besides; and it is the fact still all the world over inside the Catholic Church. It's a supernatural fact, and one of the signs of the true Church; and God will call Protestants to account for not seeing it. See it indeed they do, but they shut their eyes, and it makes no more

sion on them than our Lord's marvellous works did unbelieving Jews.

Well, having one faith and one doctrine, of course Church, as you say, can teach the whole world.

Yes; but the Catholic Church is not a teacher only of mouth: it's a society, a kingdom; and as the spreads Protestantism and all sorts of false doctrines through the very air we breathe, so the Catholic Church is the truth of Christ like an atmosphere, as I may say around.

I see what you're at. You are thinking of what I said people picking up their notions when they are children all their life long they don't know how, from those they hear amongst. We hear what our parents and neighbours say, and we hear people talking in the streets and in the newspapers; and we read what's said in the newspapers; and then we repeat it to others, and so the notions spread.

Just so; the world has its teachings, false and unteachings, ever going on in all manners of ways: a fact, an undeniable fact; and yet Protestants think God has done nothing to set against all this. They say He has left this tremendous power to itself, and we have nothing to set up against it. Men are made by society: this is a fact; and God has met another fact. God has *His* society, His own *divine* society. He has always had it on earth; He never left it to themselves or to books. There were the old pagans and their society; there was the Jewish Church.

Christ came; and ever since there has been the Christian Church—"the One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church"—and this is God's society, the "Kingdom of God on earth."

Society—kingdom—this is a new idea to me—set against the world; then, of course, it must be made to hold together and have strong foundations; it must have government and rulers appointed by God.

All very true; and if you follow up the idea, you'll find the Pope, and bishops, and priests, in fact the whole Church, by you've heard so much about lately. But let us

this vast field, this very world in fact, Protestants think has left to itself. All He has done, according to the Bible, is to have a book written—a book without an interpreter. They do not believe that He has set apart a body of men to guide, teach, and influence others. All this, they say, is a merely human thing, and no part of God's plan for instructing and saving mankind; and yet when they have said this, they try and do the very same thing for themselves. They teach and preach, and lay down the law, and declare every body must believe what they say, or be damned.

B. I quite see what you mean. The Protestants make the most ludicrous attempts to act like a church, but they feel it's the only way there is of really doing anything at all; and all the while they deny that there is a Church on earth with authority from God, any rule to be obeyed, or teachers to be believed.

S. It's just another case of what I said before. Catholics do by right and on principle what Protestants attempt to do without either.

B. The upshot, then, of the whole matter, as I understand it, is just this: here we have, on the one side, a parcel of people doing what, on their own principles, they have no right to do, preaching the "Word" as they call it, when all the time they say the Bible only is the Word; and talking, and wrangling, and making such a confusion of sounds, that it's impossible for a plain straightforward man to know what to believe. And here, on the other side, is the Catholic Church, claiming to be set up by God to preach and teach the word of God, as true a word as any written word, and, as a matter of fact, teaching one and the same thing plain and distinct all the world over, so that every body as chooses can understand. Now such a Church as this, I say, is a *great fact*, and a fact that cannot be shirked or pooh-poohed by talking Protestant nonsense about the Bible only; and as I've learnt so much, I've *determined* to learn more; and I won't be satisfied, *what it may*, till I've got at the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.





